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# Pine

Moonglow cloaking the pines, draped in capes of Snow,
as the Christmas tree gleams by the window, far from its forest Home,
lights, twining around its branches, twinkling like stars up in midnight Sky,
a boa of silver tinsel, snaking from the tip of the tree, down to its lowest branch,
grazing its trunk where it felt the first cut,
its roots, severed with the forest, forever, that day,
leaving the other pines behind,
as it was carried away and brought to this place, the strange space cramping its branches, as it peered out the window,
day and night, at all the trees, free to breathe Air, laced with snowflakes, tumbling down, its needles, missing the feeling
of that first fall of Snow, veiling the forest in a silence, that grew deeper every night and every day, 'till it was whisked away,
to stand here by the window, alone, wondering whether the elders and saplings feel its absence, the blank space in the Snow,
not knowing that its arrival, here, in its new Home, brought the greatest gift to the children who adorned its branches
with coloured balls that glittered like tiny planets,
large hands lifting smaller ones to place the tinfoil star on the top of the tree,
the pine listening to sounds that it doesn't recognize as laughter, knowing only the caws of ravens and crows,
the voices, soft and loud, growing on the pine,
cloaking it in a feeling of belonging,
as the voices gather around it every evening to laugh and sometimes, sing, bringing the Christmas tree more gifts
to adorn its branches with, its shimmer and glimmer reflected in the eyes of those who adore it,
and soon, the pine grows to love its new Home, as much as it did, the forest, missing the sounds of voices and laughter
when the family slinks upstairs to sleep, leaving the lights to twinkle on its branches, leaving the tree alone,
to peer at its reflection in the window, catching glimpses of other trees,
on the other side of the glass, their silhouettes, cloaked in Snow,
a feeling seizing the pine, as a shiver slithers through its branches, beneath the swelter of the tinsel boa,
snaking from its tip, down to its lowest branch, where a glittering ball wobbles, then falls to the ground,
the sound, louder than the pinecones that used to tumble from the tree,
its quiet pining for the forest, growing deeper each night,
as it peers up at the face of Moon, beaming up in Sky, stars twinkling brighter than the lights that twine around its branches,
but soon, that morning arrives, when the voices and laughter are louder than usual, and the family gathers around the tree,
the pine, wishing it could see what the small hands are doing,
foraging around the base of its trunk, like squirrels pawing at the forest floor,
the children's glee, seeping into the Christmas tree, feeling the meaning of family, without knowing the word,
because how could it know, that soon its lights would dim, and it would be stripped of its shimmer and glimmer,
and dragged Outside, to quiver in the Snow,
far from the cradle of its forest Home.

*Sylvie Kalenda*

CountyLife

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**Canadian Tire ***
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***All inserts are to selected distribution areas.***

For information on how your flyer can be inserted each week in County Life please contact Melissa Armstrong at **613-332-2002** or **melissa@haliburtonpress.com**

# Wishing you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season filled with warmth, laughter, and cherished moments.

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# 57th Minden Christmas Bird Count on the horizon

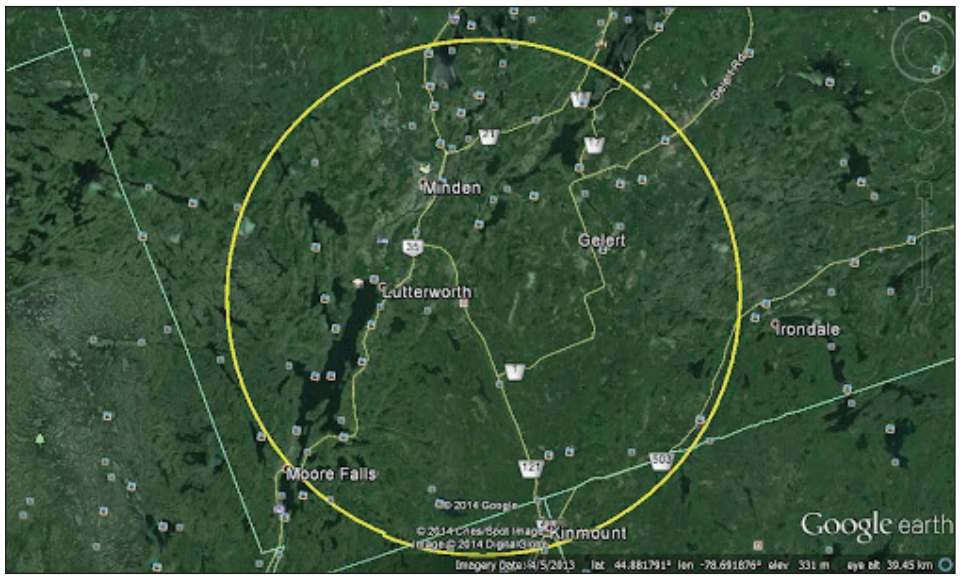
**ED POROPAT**
Special to *County Life*

The shortening days and the arrival of cooler temperatures signal another coming winter and yet another Minden Christmas Bird Count. This year's 57th annual count will take place on Saturday, Dec. 16, so stock your feeders and get your binoculars ready. Early signs are suggesting that 2023 could be a busy count.

## How does a bird count operate?

First, a standardized 24 km diameter circle is superimposed on a map. This same circle has been used since 1967, when former Minden resident Dennis Barry and a friend, George North, compiled the very first Minden Christmas Bird Count. That year, they were the only 2 participants! Since those early days, interest in this annual event has grown tremendously. Some people prefer to watch their feeders from the comfort of their own home, while others brave the elements and spend the entire day outdoors, combing thickets, open fields, neighbourhoods, lakes, and forests for birds.

The count circle is further subdivided into workable areas, and teams of birders are assigned to each one. Their goal for the day is to find and count every bird they see or hear, a challenging task indeed! Throughout the day, participants move around their areas, to avoid "double counting" the same birds. In addition, they also visit as many different habitats as possible to locate as many species as they can. By the end of the 24-hour count period, a picture begins to form - a static image in time showing which birds are present within the count circle on that specific day and a rough indication of how many of each. Some birds are certainly missed, especially secretive ones, but when the collected data is synthesized with the effort involved on the day, some valuable information becomes available to the scientific community. This data, combined with hundreds of other counts across Canada and North America, allow scientists to glean information about bird movements and populations across the continent. Although bird numbers can fluctuate enormously in a region year-to-year, analyzing statistics over decades using continent-wide data, allows for a meaningful assessment of species abundance. Over time, population declines can be noticed in some species, and increases in others. Black-backed Woodpeckers, Canada Jays, House Sparrows, and Boreal Chickadees, for example, have all shown declines across the decades in our county. Trumpeter Swans, Bald Eagles, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, and Wild Turkeys, on the other hand, have shown dramatic increases.



The 24 km count circle used for the Minden Christmas Bird Count since 1967. /Submitted

The Minden Christmas Bird Count circle stretches from Moore Falls and Kinmount in the south, to Lochlin and Horseshoe Lake in the north. It includes the communities of Gelert, Ingoldsby, Miner's Bay, and of course, Minden.

## What can you expect this winter?

Avian movements and abundance are closely tied to food availability during the tough winter months. This year, there is a plethora of natural food in the woods so we can expect good numbers of winter finches. The pines, spruces, firs, and birches have all had exceptional seed crops this year. Many are still heavily laden and offering a promising meal for birds and rodents. This fact, combined with the failure of cone crops in other parts of the continent have led to wandering mixed flocks of finches, looking for food to sustain them during the difficult winter months. Haliburton County will be a destination for some of these roaming flocks. After being largely absent for more than a year, Pine Siskins have returned in strong numbers. Common Redpolls have already begun to show up also. We can expect to see more of them as the winter progresses. Red Crossbills have been exploiting the White Pine and Red Pine cone crop all summer and will likely continue through the winter. These resilient birds may even nest through the winter months! Their smaller-billed cousins, the White-winged Crossbill, are also beginning to show up. They prefer smaller cones produced by spruce and tamarack.

**see page 5**

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year*
**from all of us at Haliburton Timber Mart**

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**from page 4**

American Goldfinches and Purple Finches have flocked up and will remain in the area through the winter this year. Occasional Pine Grosbeaks are being heard also. Look for them near fruit trees, devouring ornamental crab apples or nipping at apples that have remained on trees. Evening Grosbeaks have been virtually absent this fall, however, possibly being drawn to the coasts where cone crops are also excellent or remaining in the boreal forest where chokecherry and berry crops are above average. Expect to see fewer of them in late 2023 than in the past couple of years.

The acorn crop was also quite good this fall so many of our blue jays will remain in the area. You can expect these bossy but beautiful birds at your feeders all winter long. They prefer peanuts but will eat corn or sunflower seeds also. Look for the declining Canada Jay among the flocks of Blue Jays. These intelligent birds will follow Blue Jays to good sources of food. Now genuinely rare in the southern part of the county, Canada Jays prefer suet at feeding stations. Consider yourself very lucky if you find one of these charismatic birds visiting your yard.

Erecting bird feeders and keeping them well stocked allows the local birds to supplement their natural diet with a guaranteed source of food. Resident birds such as chickadees, nuthatches, and woodpeckers learn to visit feeding stations regularly. Their constant movement in and out of specific yards sometimes draws other species also. Dark-eyed Juncos and American Tree Sparrows will home in on these movements. If there is enough cover close by such as a cedar hedge, you might even find a Northern Cardinal or White-throated Sparrow visiting occasionally. Both would be nice records for the count. And, of course, where there are gatherings of many birds, one can also expect predators such as hawks or even a hungry Northern Shrike. These predatory songbirds have hooked bills but no talons. Instead, they must impale their prey on thorns or barbed wire to feed. With so much natural food in the forest this year, do not be concerned if bird numbers appear low at your feeders. Our feathered friends may not need to visit feeding stations as frequently as in some years.

A Pine Siskin picks grit off the road to help with digestion. /ED POROPAT Special to County Life

Although the cool temperatures are starting to ice up wetlands and smaller lakes, the larger bodies of water remain open. Some loons are still lingering in the region and many northern ducks such as Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, and Hooded Merganser continue feeding in the area in large numbers, fattening up for their eventual flight further south. Trumpeter Swans are beginning to gather at river outlets where they will likely try to overwinter. This situation can change quickly, however. With the count still a few weeks away, several nights of frigid temperatures can alter the landscape swiftly.

Bald Eagles seem to be increasing in numbers lately and are regularly observed at local landfills and any areas with open water. The abundance of finches could also entice some of the bird-eating predators such as the Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, or even a Peregrine Falcon to remain in our area through the winter.

Finally, checking any berry bushes or fruit trees in your area could result in some interesting finds. Aside from grosbeaks, these shrubs and trees could draw a stunning flock of Bohemian Waxwings, a lingering American Robin, or even our first Brown Thrasher or Gray Catbird for the count.

Once a regular bird in Haliburton County, the Canada Jay is now a rare find.

How Can You Help and Where Do You Send Your Results?

If you would like to participate as a field counter or a feeder watcher, please contact Ed Poropat at 705-457-3018 or email at ed.barb@sympatico.ca

To report birds at your feeder on the day of the count, you can phone me at the above number on Monday, December 18th. Alternatively, you can e-mail your results to me or mail them to Box 1204, Haliburton, ON, K0M 1S0.

Please send your data in promptly so it can be tallied and included in the report to the Audubon Society. Species not seen by anyone on Dec. 16, but found on December 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, or 19, will be recorded as Count Week birds.

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## The tastes of Christmas

**KATE BUTLER**
Special to *County Life*

What are your favourite flavours of the holidays? This time of year brings with it treats that are particular to the season and though trends and tastes may change to some degree, some holiday foods bring with them a long history.

Fruitcake is often the butt of jokes, but some people have speculated that similar dishes have roots going all the way to the ancient world, intended almost as the energy bars of their day. More recently, the ingredients of fruitcake - especially preserved fruits and spices - might have travelled long distances and would have been seen as a luxury treat. In any era, preparing a fruitcake is an exercise in patience, but one that's well rewarded for those who enjoy it. For those who don't, I'd say that perhaps you just haven't tried the right one yet.

Just like fruitcake, mincemeat tarts seem to divide opinions, but the original recipes for this treat might cause even more heated discussions. Yes, as the name would suggest, mincemeat did once contain actual meat. Today, that nod to the original recipe might come in the form of lard, but still with the fruits and spices that give it its distinctive taste. While these days, round tarts seem to be the norm, in previous eras, these treats were often shaped like a tiny cradle or manger, often with a pastry baby Jesus on top.

In looking through holiday back issues of the Echo, we can get other glimpses into festive treats of the more recent past. One account of a Christmas party hosted by Minden Rotary in the early 1950s, tells of an afternoon of movies at the Beaver Theatre (attended by 300 people) which was capped off by a visit by Santa himself bringing gifts of candy and fruit for the children. It might be difficult to imagine today, but fresh fruit from more tropical climates used to be a huge treat during the holidays, with an orange earning a place of pride in many stockings. More recently, many of the oranges found in stockings seem to have magically morphed into ones made of chocolate. Anyone else recall finding a Terry's chocolate orange in the toe of their stocking when they were a kid?

Holiday meals can be a grand affair, but today's meals might have a hard time holding a candle to some of the feasts of the even quite recent past. I was just thinking of the holiday meals my grandmother used to prepare. She would think nothing of preparing three kinds of stuffing for a holiday turkey, along with enough side dishes that you had no idea what was actually on your plate by the time you'd sampled a spoonful of everything. Her mashed potatoes were justly famous however, made with what seemed to be nearly equal portions of butter, cream and potatoes. According to stories I heard from my mother and aunt, the holiday meals seemed even grander when they were little because an uncle who worked as a butcher would bring extra wares from the shop where he worked and prepare "snacks" mere hours after the main meal, just in case anyone was still hungry!

Whatever your favourite holiday treats are, I hope you'll take a bit of time to indulge and to do so without guilt or judgment. Some of these treats only appear this time of year, which in and of itself can make them special, but they can also deliver with them a wonderful helping of nostalgia and a connection to history and family memories. Wishing you and yours a wonderful holiday!

## Top 10 reasons why you need a young person in your organization

THE OTHER day at our fly-fishing club meeting, we thanked our lucky stars that our one young member showed up. Aside from being a great guy, he is a real asset to the club in countless other ways. This got me thinking that every organization would benefit from having at least one young person in their ranks. Here are my top 10 reasons:

**STEVE GALEA**
Humour Columnist

1. Someone has to know how to turn on the Wi-Fi.
2. Who else is going to sit patiently as you explain how to properly peel an orange?
3. Critically important when you need to confirm if bellbottoms are still cool.
4. So, you have a reliable source on any TV remote related questions.
5. They are good people when you need to understand why the last three jokes you told should never be told again.
6. Who else is going to be really interested in what it was like in the times before computers?
7. It's nice to have someone in the group that you will be able to leave these perfectly good slacks to.
8. You have a lot of Werther's candy.
9. They've got a band. You've got a ukelele.
10. You need to understand why kids don't like Yo-yo's anymore.

## My own private December

Love that shade of blue in winter
When a dusk turns into night
Windows send their orange kindness
Over drifts curled solid tight

Folk I know prefer this season
Better than acrylic greens
Shadow, light and texture only
Not brash extroverted scenes

Like this morning when a duck-dive
(Only bird still using lake)
Left above it silver ripples
As it took a fishing break

Maybe I was solo witness
To this act of energy
One life feeding hungry other
While the day froze rapidly

Now the crystal dust from snow clouds
Crawling forward, white on dark
Paints in picture-bookish magic
Making dour heart remark

That December is for watchers
Who see more than Christmas shows
They'll look high to skies and silence
Worship all of nature's prose

*By Deborah J Reed*

## Writing on the Senior Side

# The best Christmas present

**GAIL STELTER**

Special to *County Life*

***Childhood.***

Christmas Eve is that once-a-year night when even the best little sleepers find it hard to settle down. The little bedroom is dark. The night is finally still. I try to sleep. I can't sleep. I am so excited.

"Daddy, daddy, daddy."

He doesn't hear me.

"DADDY!"'

"Gatsey, what's wrong?"

"Daddy, I hear the bells. I hear the bells on Santa's sleigh. He's close. He won't come to our house if I am awake."

"I will check." Dad looks out my bedroom window. "Yes, I hear the bells too, but don't worry, I think he is still far away. Oh wait, I can see him better now. Santa is over the schoolyard. There are three streets and lots of houses before he gets here. He knows. He will watch and wait until you are asleep."

I don't remember what I got for Christmas that year. I am sure it included books, crayons, a colouring book, new chalk, a few toys and pretty Christmas clothes. I do remember Santa's bells with my dad. Perhaps that was the best Christmas present.

Crisp and cold and new-fallen snow, Christmas morning is sunny and bright. The excitement of seeing the gifts; mom in her cozy housecoat sitting feet tucked in with her morning tea in hand; dad's Christmas hug and my teenage brother being so cool. I am about 10 years old. I have always had skates from the skate exchange or hand-me-downs from a neighbour. I never expected them. I never expected gleaming new white figure skates. I am thrilled. I slide my hand over the perfect skates, and I can't stop looking at them.

My brother Jim asks, "Would you like to try them out? Come on we can go to the gully."

The bonus of living in new suburbia is that not every piece of land is developed. The kids on Smithfield Drive had their own hill, pond, sand pit and more. In the summer, we made holes into the side of the hill and became mountain climbers; in the winter we skated on the pond in the gully. We skated around the hockey games and sometimes, when I was just little and Jimmy had to take care of me and when they were short players, I got to play too.

Mom and Dad are thinking about making their way to Alice's red and white kitchen to prepare our Christmas breakfast. Dad will set the table, make the toast and pour the tomato juice or start the morning ritual of cleaning out the turkey. Mom will do the cooking and start the prep work for the stuffing, Christmas carols will be playing and they will sing as they are at work.

As we are heading out the door, Jimmy yells, "We'll be back for breakfast, Mom. I am taking Gates to the gully to skate."

We bundle up and off we go. It is not always fun to put your skates on outside in the cold, and you know your boots will be really cold when you are done. Jimmy puts his skates on too. We skate, and my new figure skates are the best!

Perhaps the skates or perhaps skating with my big brother on Christmas morning was the best Christmas present.

***Parenthood.***

In 1983, Care Bears were introduced to the general public and the demand for these unique bears at Christmas was great. Peter was up for the challenge and seemed to delight in it. Not only did he find them for our kids, but he was also able to get them for others including one for our teller at the bank who couldn't find one for her daughter.

By the end of 1983, almost 3 million of the Cabbage Patch Kids had been "adopted" but still the demand could not be met. The Cabbage Patch Kids/ Care Bear Christmas was a challenge for many parents. The Cabbage Patch Kids were a little more difficult but, once again, Peter was determined and enjoying the hunt.

We took the kids to the Eaton Centre where Toyland featured a huge Cabbage Patch nursery. There were cribs and playpens and high chairs and more… all empty - no Cabbage Patch Kids.

Peter spent every day looking. He took time off work to look. He was determined his little ones would not be disappointed on Christmas morning.

"Gates, I am at Toy City in Mississauga, and they don't have any Cabbage Patch dolls but guess what? An employee whispered to me that a TV news crew is coming here in two hours, and they have a mountain of dolls to put out and will film everyone making grabs for them."

"That's wonderful!"

"Except that I don't have enough money with me to buy four."

"Okay, I will bring you the chequebook. I am coming now so I get back home before the older kids get home from school."

No debit or credit cards in those days. I wake up a sleeping little one, put her in the car seat and off we go. The cheque is delivered. I head home.

He did it. He even grabbed two more than we needed. He gave one away, and we kept one hidden away as a keepsake. All four kids got Cabbage Patch Kids and Care Bears for Christmas.

Will the kids say it was the best Christmas present? No, probably not, but Peter will say it was his favourite and most memorable Christmas shopping year. That certainly counts as the best Christmas present.

"Mom and Dad. Come on it's time to get up."

"It's too early."

"No, you said anytime after 7:30 a.m."

That's not too bad after all. There have been years when they start getting us at 6 a.m. I guess it's our fault. The kids are not allowed to go downstairs when they wake up. We all go at the same time. Peter and I want to be there when they walk into the living room. Peter has to go ahead and make sure the two grammas are up, turn on the Christmas tree lights and then come back upstairs where they are all waiting, not patiently, to run down.

"Where is your brother?" Peter (junior) now has a bedroom in the basement. He has to come upstairs to us without stopping to look in the living room.

"We think he is still sleeping."

That's a surprise. He is often the first one to appear. Peter's bedroom is below our Master bedroom. Suddenly, kids are on their knees at the heating floor vent yelling down at their brother. It works.

There they go. The race to the Christmas tree is on as is the thrill of seeing them "dive in" with joy and laughter. One opens quickly, two at a steady pace and the littlest one stops to play with every gift or toy and is still opening long after the rest are done.

Perhaps the best Christmas present is our four children on Christmas morning.

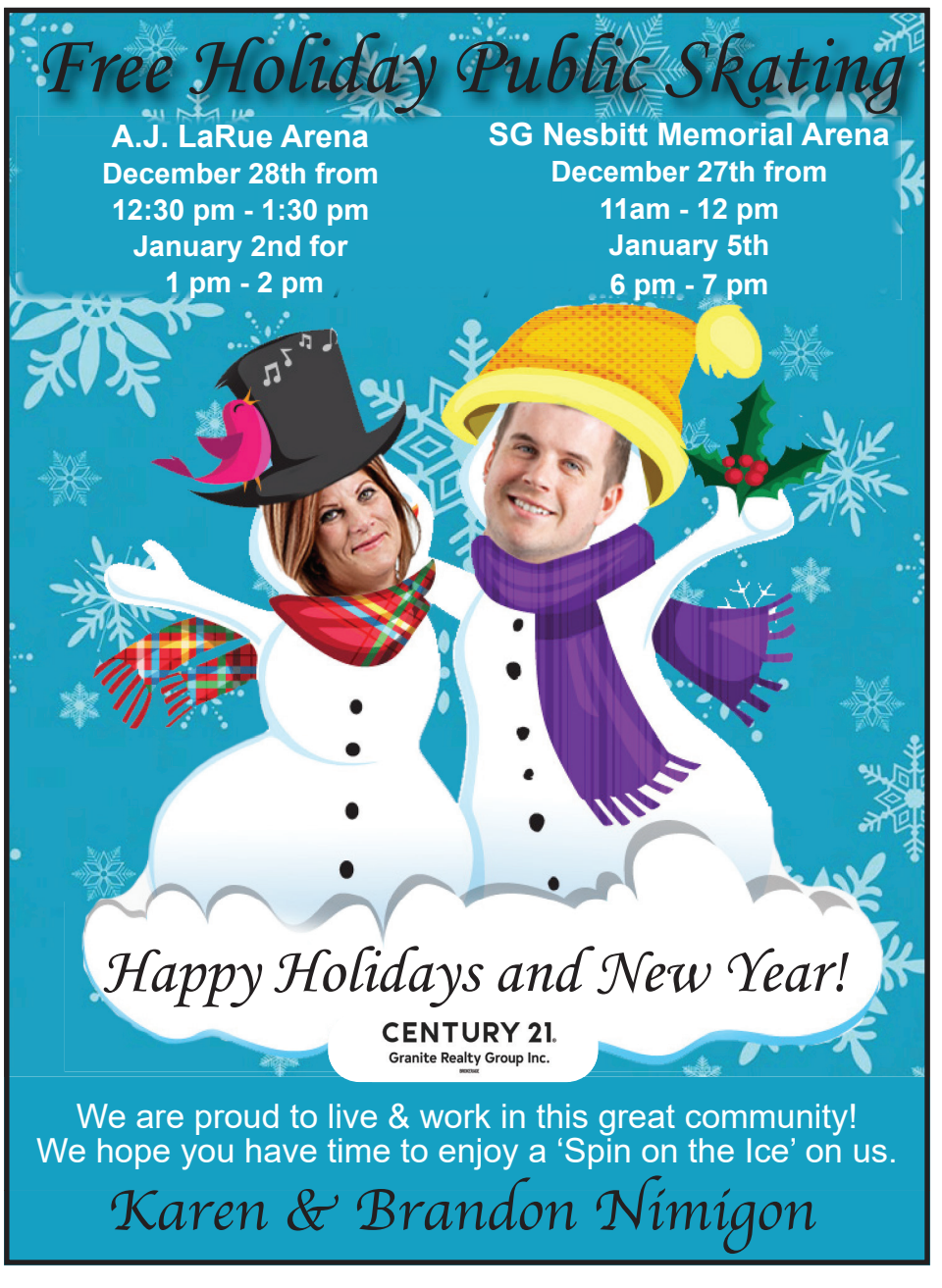
***Seniorhood.***

And no we are on the senior side, and Christmas morning is quiet. We will turn on the Christmas lights, indoors and out, and I will light my real candles. Christmas carols will be playing—coffee, perhaps with a drop of Baileys. We are content to be together. The kids will all call or FaceTime to wish us Merry Christmas. Later we will go to our daughter and her family, who we are blessed to have living here in Haliburton, for a traditional Christmas dinner with them that is always perfect.

The Stelter Family Christmas takes place on Dec. 28, 29 and 30. Twenty of us together. It is always a gift to have all our children, their spouses and grandchildren with us. Perhaps that is the best Christmas present.

I wish you a Best Christmas Present. I hope you will find it in your childhood, adulthood, parenthood or your seniorhood.

Merry Christmas!


Free Holiday Public Skating
A.J. LaRue Arena
December 28th from
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm
January 2nd for
1 pm - 2 pm
SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena
December 27th from
11am - 12 pm
January 5th
6 pm - 7 pm
Happy Holidays and New Year!
CENTURY 21
Granite Realty Group Inc.
We are proud to live & work in this great community!
We hope you have time to enjoy a 'Spin on the Ice' on us.
Karen & Brandon Nimigon

# Believe in the magic of kindness

Every time I receive a donation for the HHHS Foundation, I think of what it took for that individual to give. What made someone pick up the pen, put a stamp on an envelope, click on our website and give back to support the health of our community? I think a big misconception is that only those with a lot of "disposable" income give to charities. The funds available to them may determine the amount they give, but it rarely determines *if* they will give. People give because they believe in the cause, they believe it is important to give, and they believe in giving back to their community.

Giving back is an act of kindness. This can be shoveling a neighbour's driveway, delivering meals to those in need, listening while someone shares a life anecdote or experience, or making a gift to a local charity. Each and every act benefits the community. It could make one person smile a little bigger, laugh a little louder and maybe, just maybe, someone else will hear that laughter and smile a little bigger too. For those who are struggling at this time of year, that kindness may give them the hope they need to keep going. That little act of kindness could change someone's life.

Take Georgia and Ros for example. Georgia helped Ros find ways to thrive again: Ros was introduced to the Minden Walking Club at a time when she was struggling with her mobility and considering long-term care. Georgia, the social recreation coordinator for Community Support Services (CSS), guided Ros toward wellness over several months. Ros has joined five additional CSS programs and has successfully improved her health, reduced her medications, and now participates extensively in local programming. She continues to live happily and safely at home.

Georgia recently upskilled by completing her Senior's Fitness Instructor Certificate through an education grant from HHHS Foundation, and her clients are delighted with the fresh ideas and knowledge that she shares with them as a result. It is stories like Ros and Georgia's that remind me that one act of kindness can have a beautiful ripple effect.

And then there are people like Wally Ozog – so caring, generous and supportive of his community. On Nov. 28, Giving Tuesday, Wally chose to match gifts made to the HHHS Foundation Believe in the Magic of Giving campaign in honour of his late partner, Anu Kerstin Lellep and his parents Sophia and Martin. Wally's personal connection to HHHS and his desire to give back to the community demonstrate the positive impact that individuals can have when they come together for a common cause.

This year, gifts to the HHHS Foundation successfully funded "smart" IV pumps for critical care, subsidized hot meals and medically-required transportation for seniors in need, and awarded education grants for staff. We are grateful for the generosity of the community for making this happen.

Looking forward, our commitment to community health and wellness includes continued support for need-based initiatives like transportation and meals for seniors, staff education, and capital equipment purchases, while amplifying our focus on Diagnostic Imaging, helping bring a CT scanner and digital Mammography to the County.

Together we strive to optimize health care in the Highlands and the impact of individual gifts reaches deep into the community. Thank you for making these inspiring stories possible. Whether it's making someone smile, helping a stranger, or donating in support of our community, everyone has something to give and every act of kindness counts.

*Submitted by Melanie Klodt Wong, Executive Director, HHHS Foundation*

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See my website for current listings

"Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from My Family to Yours"

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# *Late to Christmas*

**IRV HANDLER**
Special to *County Life*

I came late to Christmas. We were an immigrant family of modest means. My father was a butcher in the city's then Jewish Kensington Market. But just because we did not celebrate Christmas, did not mean that I was able to avoid the holiday. We lived in Canada, after all, and it was obvious, even at a young age, that something special was happening. My first experience with Christmas was when I was about five years old and the Toronto Santa Claus Parade passed within a block of our house. I wasn't sure exactly what was happening, but it was a cold morning and my mother bundled me up and sent me out on the street under the care of my older sister. Even before I got to the parade, I was mesmerized by the crowd. Vendors were selling popcorn, candy apples and hot chestnuts, a food I was unfamiliar with. Other vendors were walking through the crowd swinging a whistling bird on a stick. I wanted one desperately, but money was always in short supply in our household.

When the parade actually began, it was larger than life with giant floats, marching bands, and magical costumes of every shape, colour and size. But the predominate character in the parade were the clowns. Clowns were everywhere. Circus clowns, roly-poly clowns, clown princesses and my favourite, the upside-down clowns. I was delighted when one would stop and shake hands with his feet. But the costume characters were just filler between the real stars of the parade, the floats. Giant storybook characters would slowly roll by, their heads just barely missing the streetcar wires. The coolest floats were the ones with mechanical moving parts. I was later to learn that girl and boy scouts, crouching in the interior of the float, provided the motion by manually turning cranks.

The parade ended with the obligatory appearance of Santa Claus. Santa meant nothing to me, and even at my young age, I knew that Santa would not be giving me any Christmas presents. But I did quickly learn that if you sat on Santa's lap in a department store, he would give you a candy cane.

After the parade, Santa and Christmas were everywhere; street corners, store windows, school and at friends' houses. Most Jewish kids develop a serious case of Christmas envy. Yes, we had Hanukkah, but the Festival of Lights could not compete with the glitz and glamour of Christmas. At Hanukkah, we would dutifully light the candles for eight nights, ate a dinner of latkes (potato pancakes) and I would receive a few coins (gelt) as the traditional Hanukkah gift. I would also receive a drydel (a four sided spinning top) which inevitably resulted in me losing all my Hanukkah gelt to my wily older brother. Later in life, my children would suffer that same Christmas envy. But I was raised at a time when Jews did not celebrate Christmas in their homes. We were a persecuted people, and I was taught to go through life with my head down and not to attract attention to the fact that I was different from my neighbours.

To me Christmas was a public holiday. The Santa Claus parade was always the kick-off but Christmas continued in public spaces. I celebrated Christmas, first at school Christmas assemblies and later at work Christmas parties. I would make an annual pilgrimage to view the animated downtown window displays, first by myself and then with my children. Eventually my family would be invited to our neighbours to celebrate Christmas in what they affectionately called their Orphans and Jewish Christmas dinner. I continued to attend the Toronto Santa Claus Parade and eventually fulfilled a lifelong dream by becoming a Marshall at the parade supervising the float kids. My own daughter and granddaughter joined me at the parade to became float kids waiving at the other children lining the street. Eventually I ended up Marshalling for 21 consecutive years and only ended my streak when I moved out of the city.

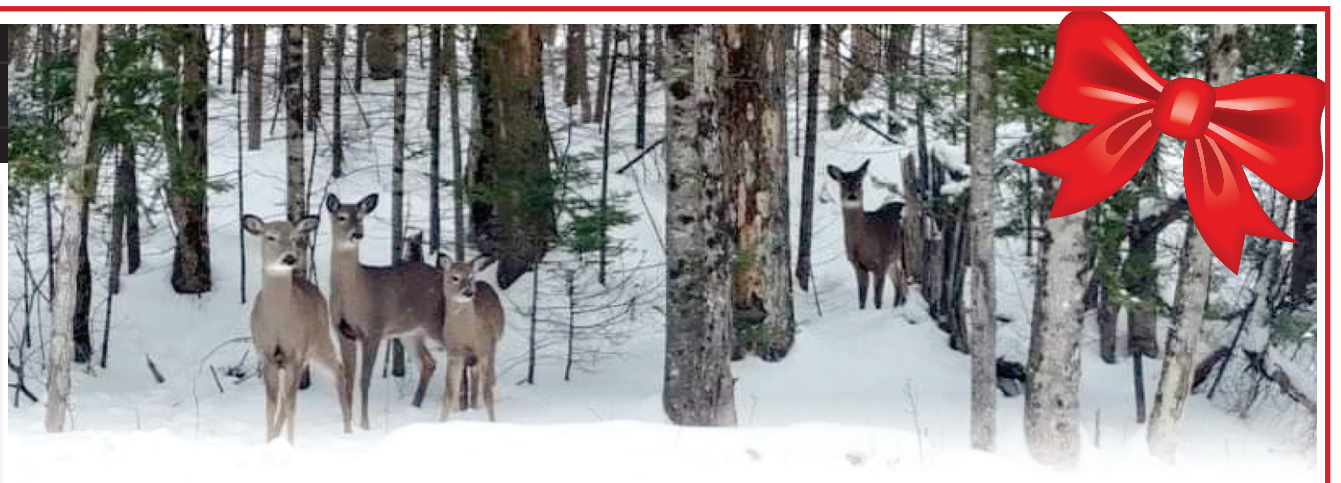
During this period, all of my Christmas celebrations were public celebrations. The closer we got to the big day, the more the celebrations moved into peoples' private homes. Christmas day itself was one of the most boring days of the year. With little else to do, I generally went out for Chinese food and a movie (what is now commonly known as a "Jewish Christmas").

But times had changed. The restaurants and movie theatres on Christmas night was no longer the exclusive preserve of Jews and Orphans. Canada had become multicultural, and it was no longer unusual to celebrate non-Christian holidays. Jews no longer felt the need to keep inconspicuous, and many, along with their Muslim, Buddhist and Shik neighbours, began to bring the celebration of Christmas into their home. My eldest daughter bought a small pink aluminum Christmas tree and started to celebrate Christmas with her own daughter. But I continued to resist.

Eventually I retired and moved to beautiful Haliburton. This is a place that lends itself to Christmas with its lovely snow laden pine forests, frozen lakes and rustic charms. It seemed a shame not to share this natural beauty, so we began to invite my wife's sister and her family to celebrate Christmas in the beautiful Highlands. I am still resisting putting up a tree and Christmas lights ,and we do not exchange gifts, but we do feast on a traditional turkey with all the fixings and go for long walks in the woods. But as we sit around a fire on a cold December night, I realize that I have finally found my own Christmas. So Merry Christmas to all and may you all share the joys of the season.

STINSON & COMPANY

Merry Christmas



705.754.2607 Lance & Debbie, Chris and Ryan

# Funds needed more then ever to tackle food insecurity in County

Food prices are affecting everyone these days, resulting in rising rates of food insecurity this winter. With inflation costs creeping up, and many individuals struggling with food and heating costs, assistance is needed more then ever.

SIRCH Community Services is no stranger to those in need, and has been working on food security for many years. In 2012, recognizing that many residents were not just lacking resources, but could also be ill, grieving, depressed or have other challenges that required a nutritious meal, SIRCH started a Community Kitchen. Volunteers came together to cook and package healthy meals which were frozen and given free to those in need.

In 2020, local housing, health and community service organizations became distribution partners to ensure that the meals reached individuals and families who needed them, right across the county and into North Hastings.

Gena Robertson, executive director of SIRCH, commented, "We are making 1,400 meals each month now, as well as homemade soups and desserts. The need is at an all time high. There are so many people struggling, it's alarming,"

Since March 2020, SIRCH has handed out more than 60,000 meals for free to individuals in Haliburton County and North Hastings. The organization has seen an influx in clients receiving their Community Kitchen meals during the past year alone.

"We will try to meet the needs as long as we can, but the thing is that Community Kitchen meals are funded entirely with donations," said Robertson. The organization is once again raising funds to support the program through its Gifts From The Heart campaign.

Community Kitchen volunteer Sharon Wilson helps prepare and package meals that are distributed for free in the community. /Photo Submitted

The meals have a significant impact and the feedback received exemplifies that.

"Without the help of these meals we wouldn't be eating this week," said one meal recipient.

"We see a lot of malnourished people, and having healthy meals from SIRCH is a blessing. It keeps people from starving … not just from malnutrition, but from starving!" commented one of the community distributors of the meals.

Long time Community Kitchen volunteer Margaret Cox has seen the impact first hand and believes in the power of these free meals.

"Since 2016 I have been a volunteer at the SIRCH Community Kitchen. Besides working alongside other amazing and dedicated volunteers and staff, it has given me a way of contributing in a meaningful way to addressing food insecurity in our community," said Cox.

"When I first started, we met every other week and cooked and packaged 160 meals each time. During COVID I was one of the few volunteers who continued to help regularly. We saw the need grow for meal production to not only occur every week, but increasing quantities needed to be produced … the Community Kitchen meals are nutritious, tasty and easy to re-heat. As they are offered free to those in need they really make a significant difference in their lives."

Apart from tackling food insecurity, SIRCH impacts the community in so many ways, whether it's by suppling warm winter gear for free to adults and children, diverting thousands of reusable items from the local landfills, offering school readiness programs to children entering school, and much more.

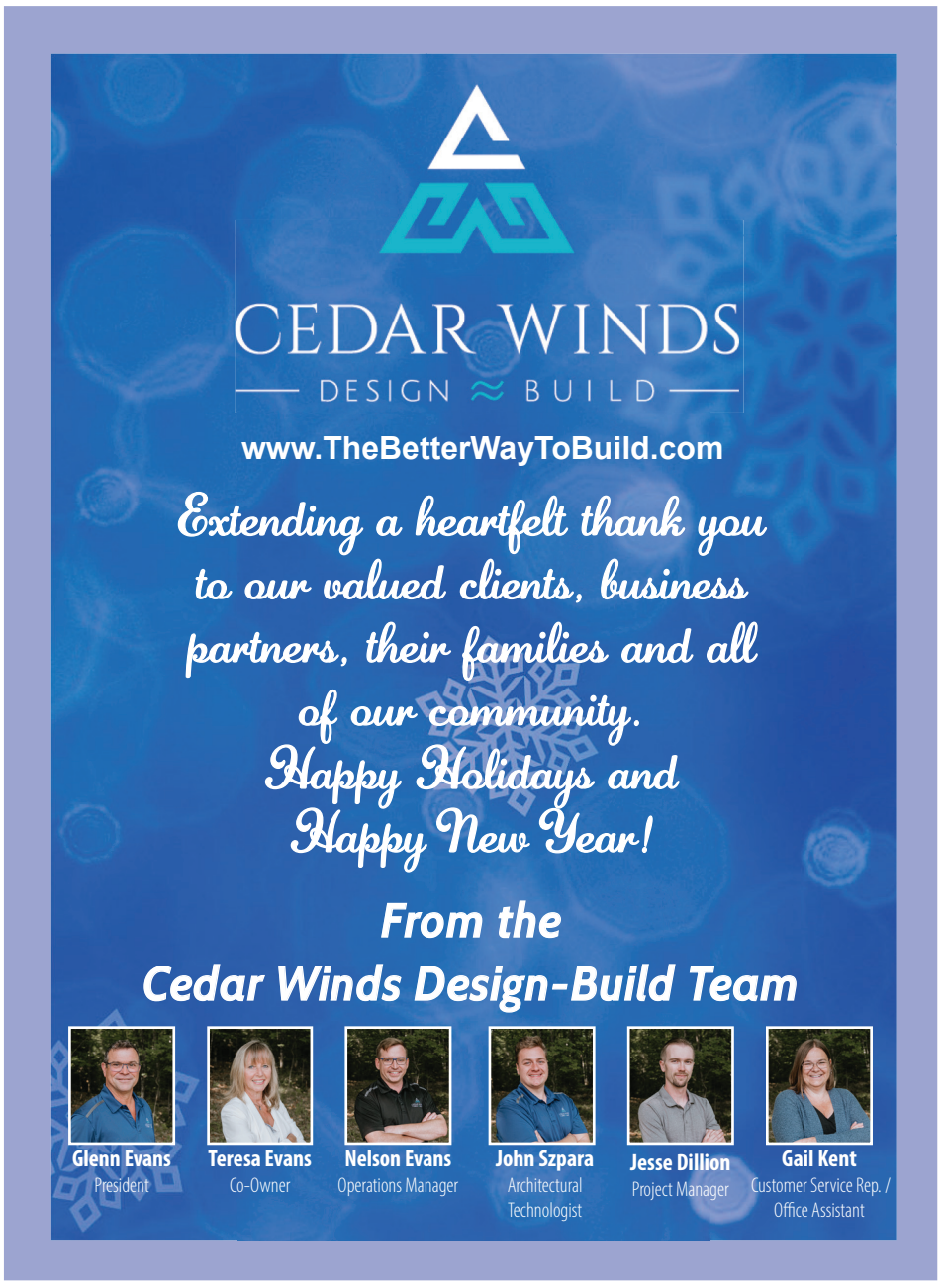
Please consider donating generously to Gifts From The Heart this year to help SIRCH continue to strengthen resilience, one meal at a time.

To donate, go online to sirch.on.ca/donate or call 705-457-1742. Additionally you can visit us at 49 Maple Ave. in Haliburton or mail a cheque to SIRCH Community Services, PO Box 687, Haliburton ON, K0M 2K0.

Thank you for your unwavering support of SIRCH Community Services this holiday season and throughout the year.

*Submitted by*
*SIRCH Community Services*

We are inspired by this community everyday and deeply grateful to serve and make a difference in people's lives. Thank you for your ongoing belief and support in what we do.
Merry Christmas!
SIRCH
community services



# Nature in your backyard

*County Life* welcomes photo submissions depicting life in the Highlands. Email vivian@ haliburtonpress.com. Please ensure images are high resolution - 200 dpi, 10 inches at its longest edge.

A Gold-Crowned Kinglet. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

A snowy doe. / Submitted by Jill Moulton

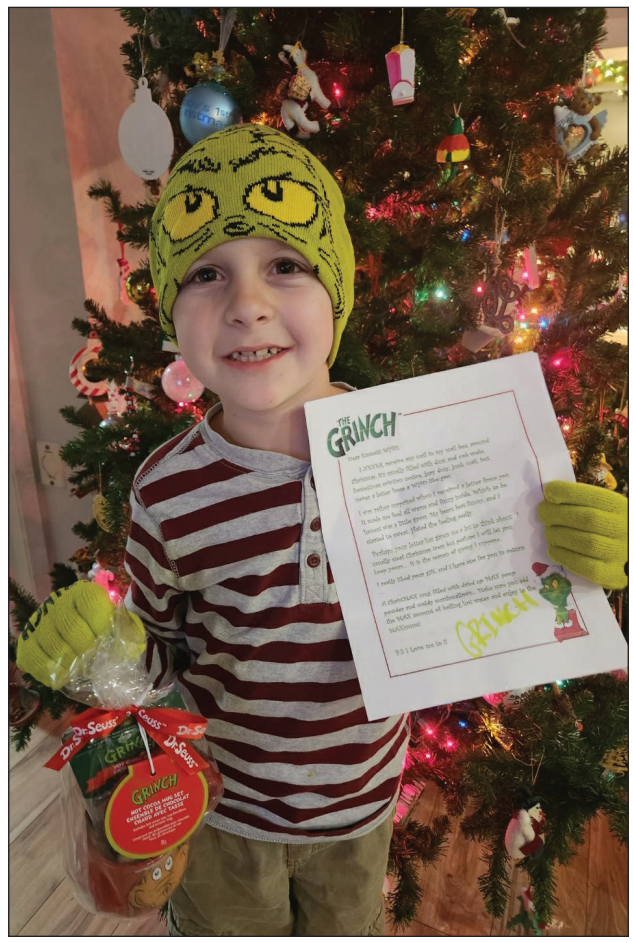
A Red Squirrel looks down from a branch. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

A little "Charlie Brown" Pine tree. /Submitted by Tammy Nash

# Northern HVAC "Grinch Letter" contest winners

Sam Parker

Harper Hamilton



Emmett Mitchell

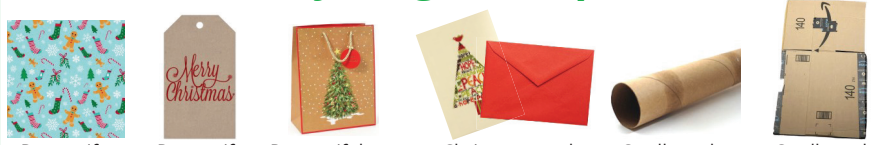
# Holiday Recycling

## Recycling for Containers

Rinse all containers and ensure they are clean of liquids or food

Aluminum foil and trays | Metal food cans | Plastic bottles (caps can be left on) | Plastic tubs, containers

## Recycling for Papers




Paper gift wrap | Paper gift tags | Paper gift bags (remove string) | Christmas cards & envelopes | Cardboard rolls | Cardboard boxes (flatten)

## Garbage

Metallic or foil wrapping paper | Ribbons, bows, tape | Styrofoam shipping block | Bubble wrap | Broken ornaments | Plastic toy packaging (hard-to-cut material)

## Dysart Landfill Holiday Hours

**Sunday, December 24, 2023 (Christmas Eve)**
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Haliburton, Harcourt, Kennisis Lake, West Bay, West Guilford

**Monday, December 25, 2023 (Christmas Day)**
*Closed: All Dysart Landfills*

**Tuesday, December 26, 2023 (Boxing Day)**
10 a.m. to 5 p.m.: Haliburton, West Guilford
12 noon to 5 p.m.: Harcourt, Kennisis Lake, West Bay

**Sunday, December 31, 2023 (New Year's Eve)**
9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Haliburton, Harcourt, Kennisis Lake, West Bay, West Guilford

**Monday, January 1, 2024 (New Year's Day)**
*Closed: All Dysart Landfills*

**Tuesday, January 2, 2024**
8 a.m. to 5 p.m.: West Guilford
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Harcourt, Kennisis Lake, West Bay
*Closed: Haliburton*

Municipality of Dysart et al

www.dysartetal.ca
705-457-1740

# Gifts *from the* Heart

*strengthening resilience ... one meal at a time*

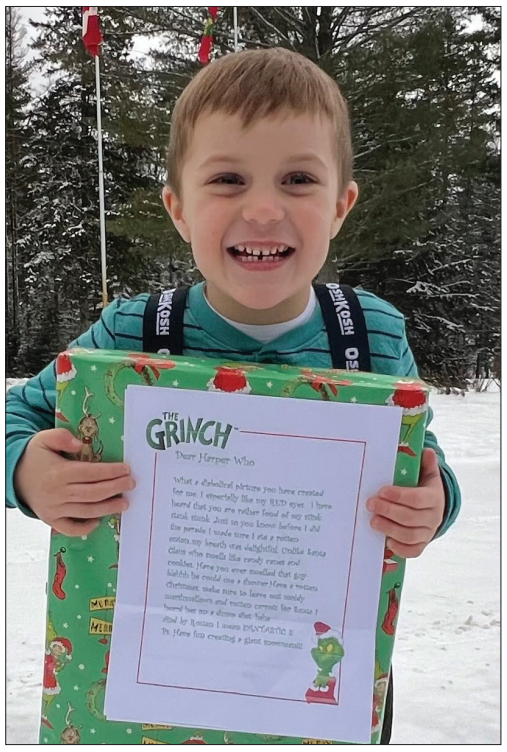
**By donating generously to SIRCH you are helping tackle food insecurity in our community.**

"Without the help of these meals we wouldn't be eating this week."

*SIRCH Community Kitchen Meal Recipient*

sirch.on.ca
705-457-1742

# Northern HVAC "Grinch Letter" contest winners




Harper Roberts

Carter Lowes

Tathan and Tecwyn McCutcheon

Ethan Bird

Ewelina Porzuczek

Abby Stancati

Ella Hirstwood

McKenna Dykes

MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY NEW YEAR

*All the best for the Holiday Season and the New Year from the Irondale Community*
**www.IrondaleOntario.ca**

**In The True Spirit Of The Season**
***Merry Christmas***
**from**
**HALIBURTON VETERINARY SERVICES**

## Holiday activities at the library

At Haliburton County Public Library, there will be a Winter Craft Table available at all branches during the school winter break. Children of all ages are welcome to drop by for a fun selection of crafts and colouring pages. There are free STEM activity kits available to pick up at all Haliburton County Public Library branches in December. Kids ages 6-13 can take one home to create a light up gingerbread house. There are felt activity boards to play with at the Dysart and Minden Hills branches. Pictured are the Porzuczek kids at the winter craft table last year. /Submitted by HCPL

Pictured is a felt board activity at the Dysart branch.

# Legion Events

### Branch 129 Haliburton

**Mondays:** Bridge every Monday at 1 p.m. Schofield Room.
**Tuesdays:** League darts starting at 7 p.m.
**Wednesdays**:
Bid Euchre 1 p.m. start – Main Hall.
Bingo doors open at 6 p.m.
Bingo starts at 7 p.m. $500 Jackpot - $1000 Jackpot - last Wednesday of the month
**Thursdays**: General Meeting third Thursday of the month, starting at 7 p.m. All members urged to attend.
Ladies Auxiliary last Thursday of the month at 1 p.m.
**Fridays:** Meat draw has five draws, five prizes each draw, first draw at 4:30 p.m., last draw at 6:30 p.m. Tickets are $2 per draw. Ed Pickard, MC.
Friday fun darts from 4:30 p.m. and onwards.
**Saturdays:** 50/50 Draw 4 p.m. draw – tickets are $1 each available in the Clubroom.
*Whether you're planning a function for 10 or 200, for more information call the Legion today at 705-457-2571, email rcll129@outlook.com or visit haliburtonlegion.com. Come on out and support Haliburton Legion Branch 129 ... everyone is welcome!*
Club room hours: Mon. 3 to 6 p.m., Tues. 3 to 9 p.m., Wed/Thurs. 3 to 6 p.m. Fri. 3 to 7 p.m. and Sat. 3 to 6 p.m.

### Branch 636 Minden

**Monday to Thursday** Lunch 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. with regular menu and daily special including Liver Lovers' Tuesday.
**Friday** Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
**Saturday** All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with Meat draws at 11:30 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541
**Weekly Activities:**
Karaoke every second Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week
Tuesday: Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m., Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
***Schedules are subject to change without notice, so contact each Legion for updates.***

### Wilberforce

Dec. 21 - OPEN 2 to 6 p.m.
Dec. 22 - OPEN 2 to 8 p.m. Wings/Jam 5 to 8 p.m.
Dec. 23 - Open 2 to 6 p.m. Meat Draw 3 p.m.
Dec. 24-26 - Closed
Dec. 27 - Open 2 to 6 p.m. No darts
President's Levy - Dec. 30 3 to 6 p.m. Drop In- Refreshments
If you are planning an event our Ladies Auxiliary would be pleased to cater. Please call the branch at 705-448-2221 to arrange your event.

What my true love gave to me.

*Happy holidays from all of us at Hockley!*

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HOCKLEYBEER.CA

# Holiday artwork by students at Cardiff Elementary School

## Dear Santa,

My name is Meeya.

I am 5 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I LeT MI SeSTR EN MI ROM.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

UNECORN DRES

PLADO

Meeya

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is [illegible].

I am 2 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I helped MI MOm W the Plants.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

Gabbys Dollhouse

a WLOS

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is Lilah.

I am 5 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I LEt ELlAPlg with my specIglst toy.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

a mi-LIFcamping SET

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is Kanter.

I am 4 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was helping mommy going grocery shopping.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

some cool blocks

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is Karter.

I am 4 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I got Jasmine's soother for mommy.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

a Gabby Waterpark

a Princess set

a bigger castle for my dollys

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is Greyson.

I am 5 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I b4lt my christmastree.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

toy WDIKeTDIKIe

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is [illegible].

I am 4 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I helped my mom do laundry.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

a whole box of toys

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is [illegible].

I am 5 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was helping my baby sister.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

1. a Peppa Pig toy for my baby sister
2. a counting toy so I can help my baby sister count
3. a sheet so I can draw anything I want

Thank you & Merry Christmas!

## Dear Santa,

My name is Wyatt.

I am 4 years old.

One extra nice thing I did this year was I played with my little sister.

For Christmas this year, I would be really happy if you could bring me one of these things:

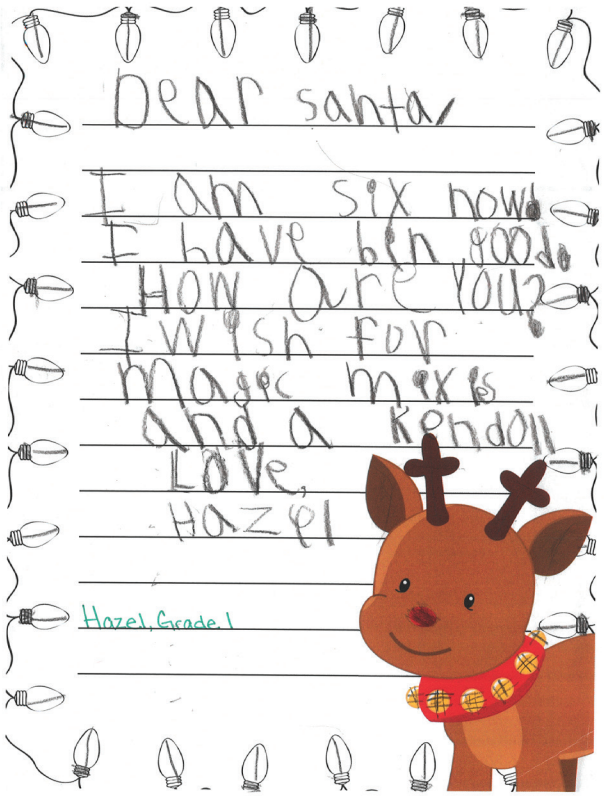
Hot Wheels

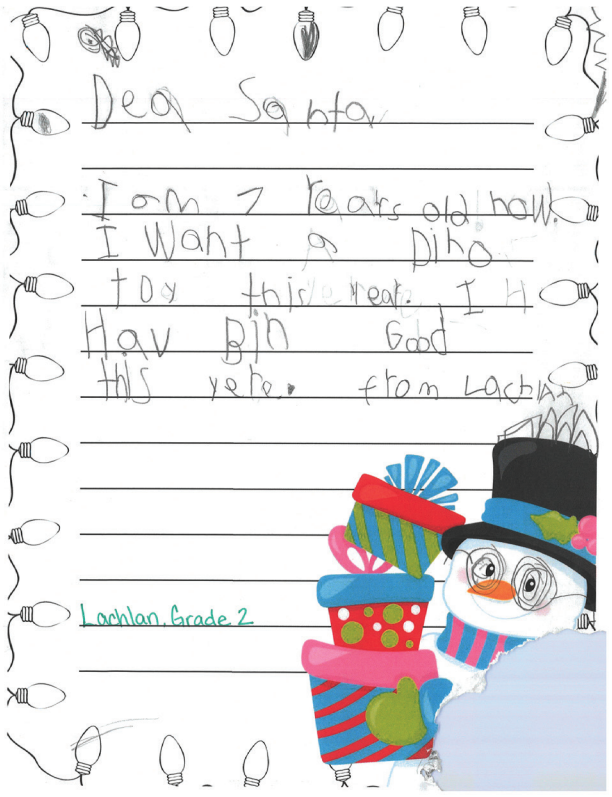
sand

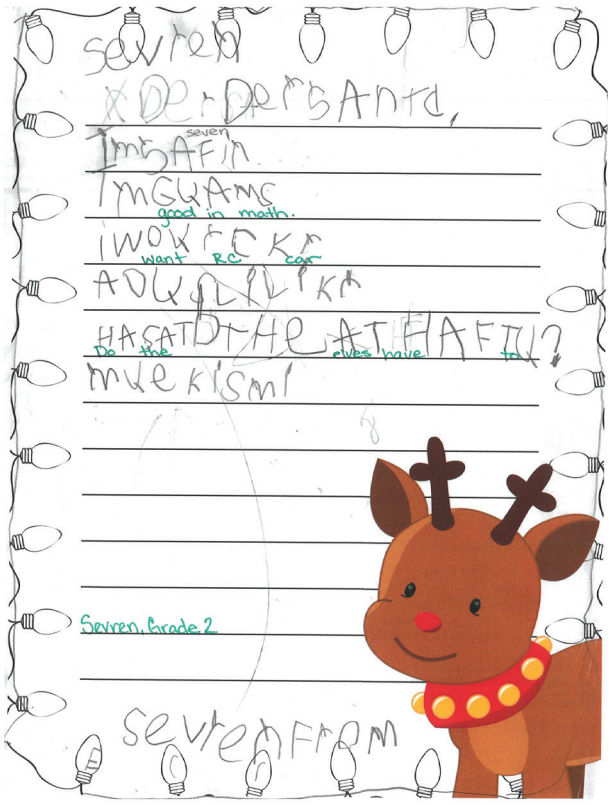
connect cube

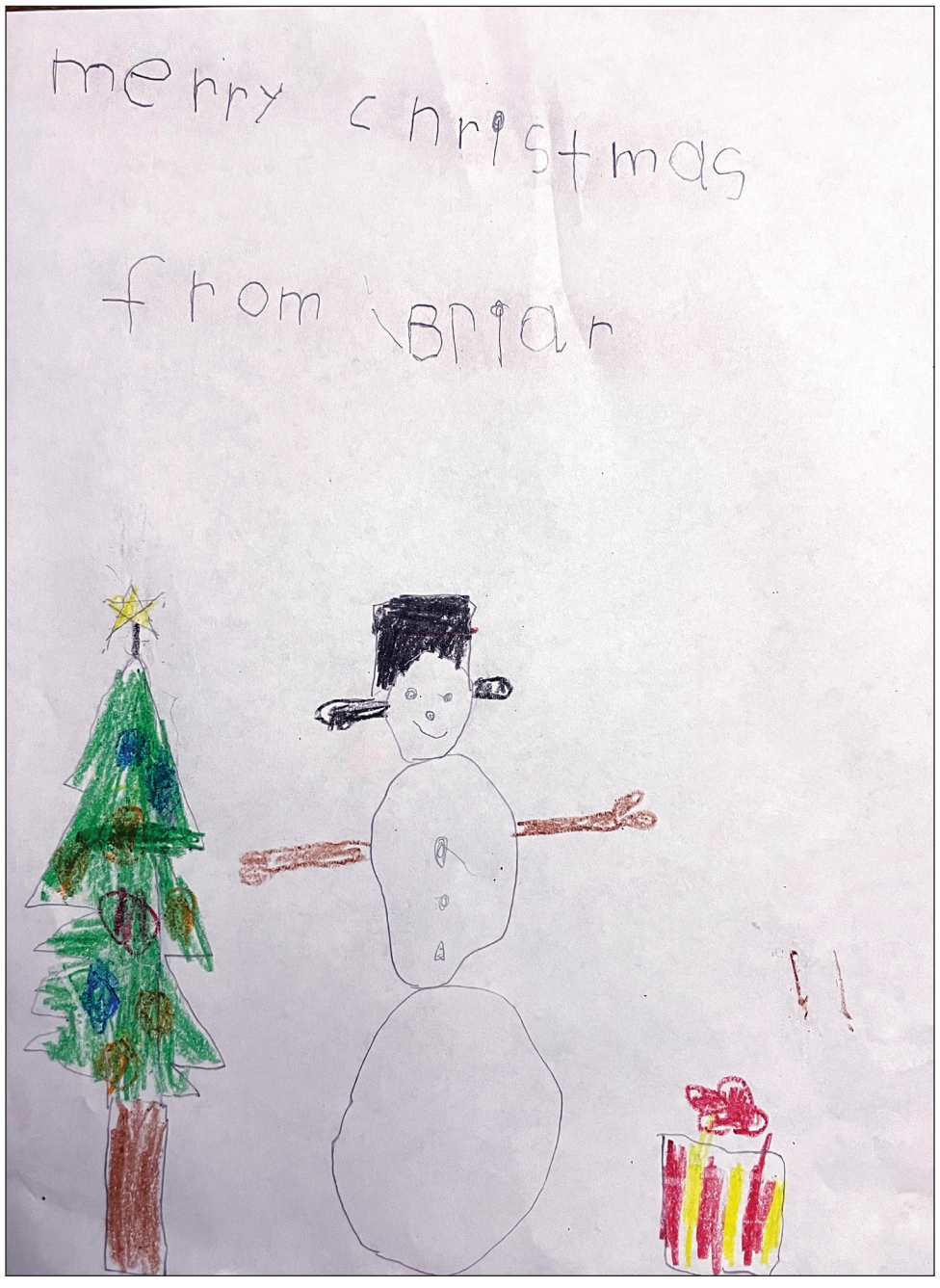
Thank you & Merry Christmas!

# Holiday artwork by students



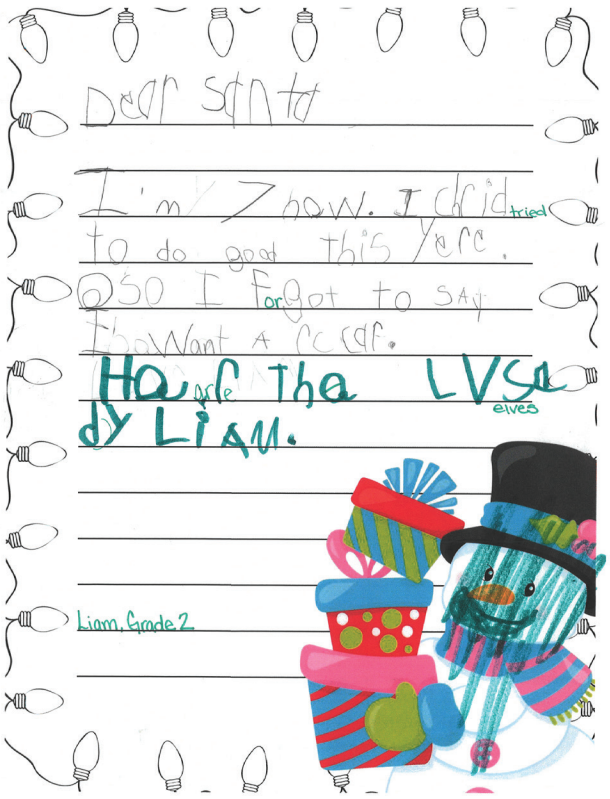



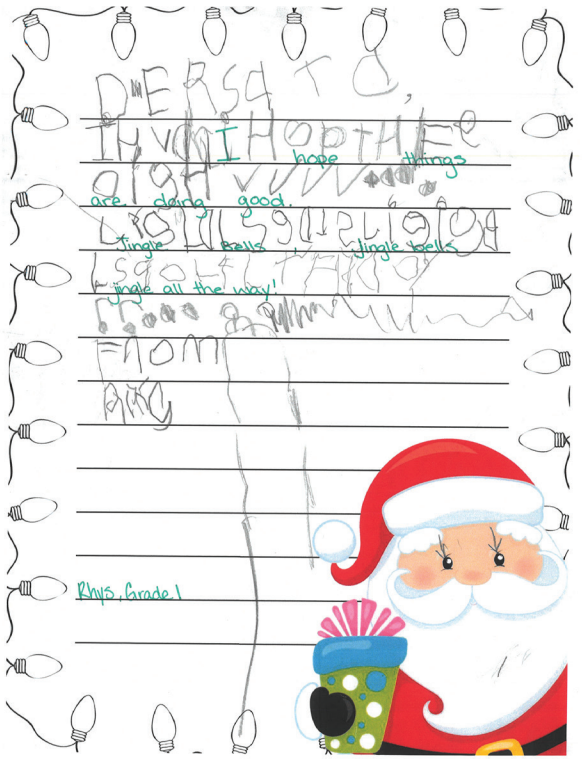



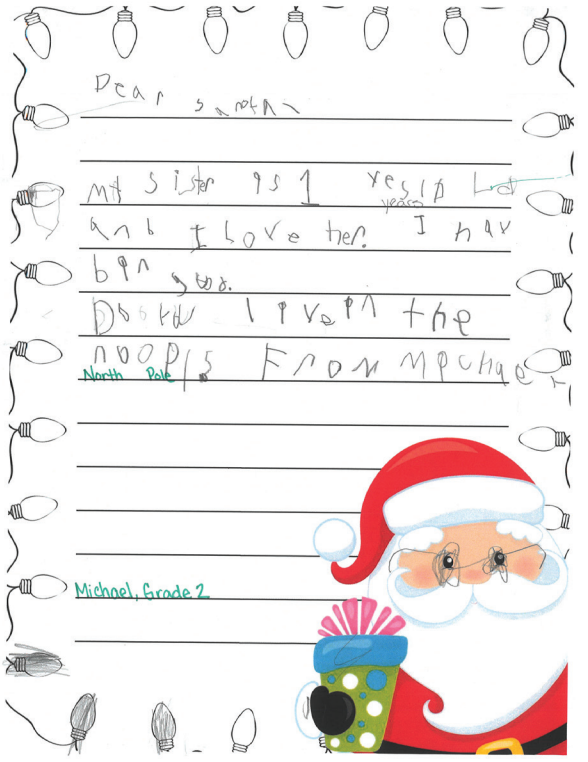

Artwork by Briar Clement /Submitted

Artwork by Eden Falco, Minden. /Submitted

# at Cardiff Elementary School


Dear Santa
I'm sorry how. I did tried to do good this year.
Also I forgot to say I Want A Ccar.
How are the LVSL elves dy Liam.
Liam, Grade 2



# Holiday artwork by students

Northern HVAC and Staff are wishing everyone a Safe and Happy Holiday!
*Jessica, Mckye, Bronson, Kayla and Kieran*
NORTHERN HVAC CO.
FAST RELIABLE SERVICE
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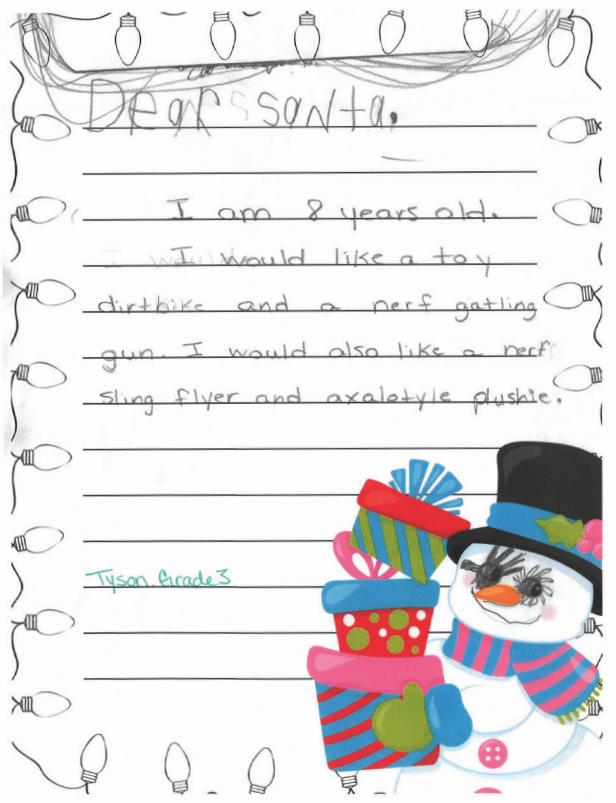
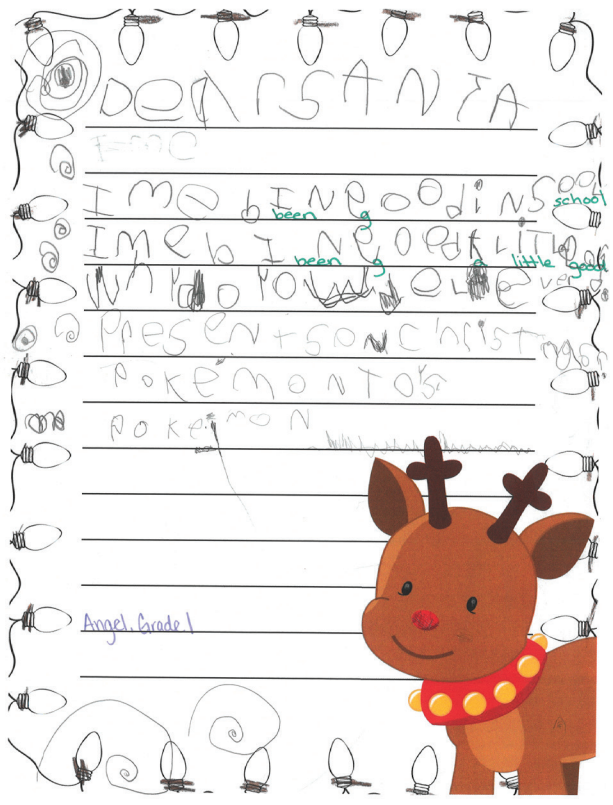

Dear Santa,
I am 8 years old.
I would like a toy dirtbike and a nerf gatling gun. I would also like a nerf sling flyer and axaletyle plushie.
Tyson, Grade 3




*Wishing everyone a safe and Merry Christmas!*
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**REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE**
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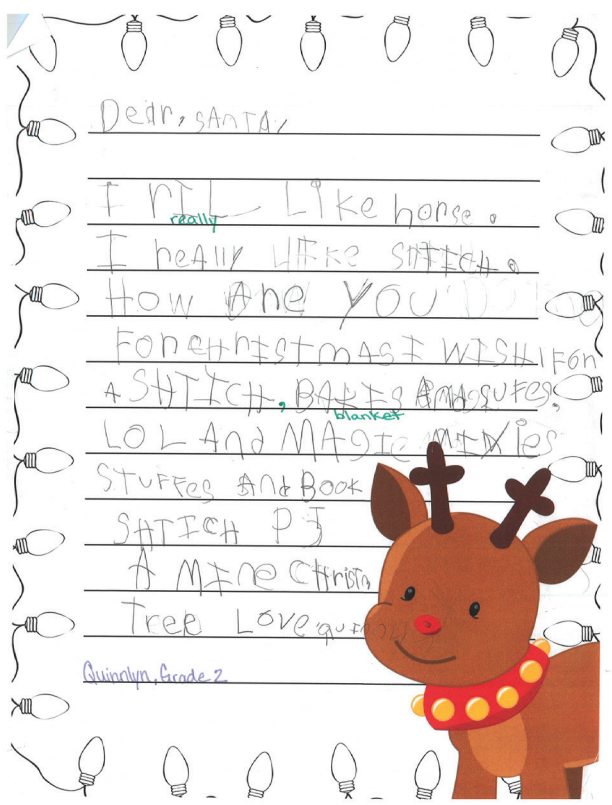
Dear Santa,
I am 8 years old now! I would like some barbes for Christmas.
I have been good this year.
Why is your name Santa?
From aubriella
Aubriella, Grade 3

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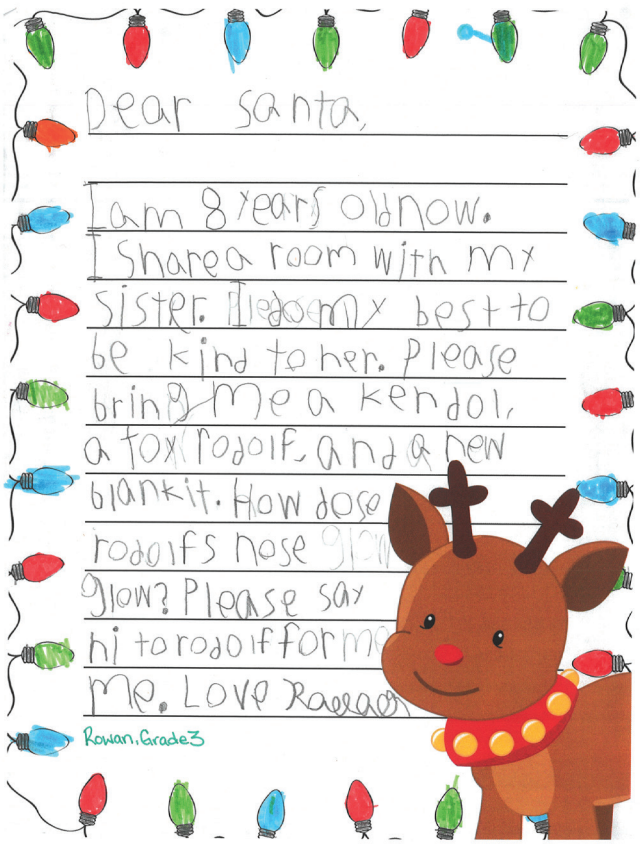
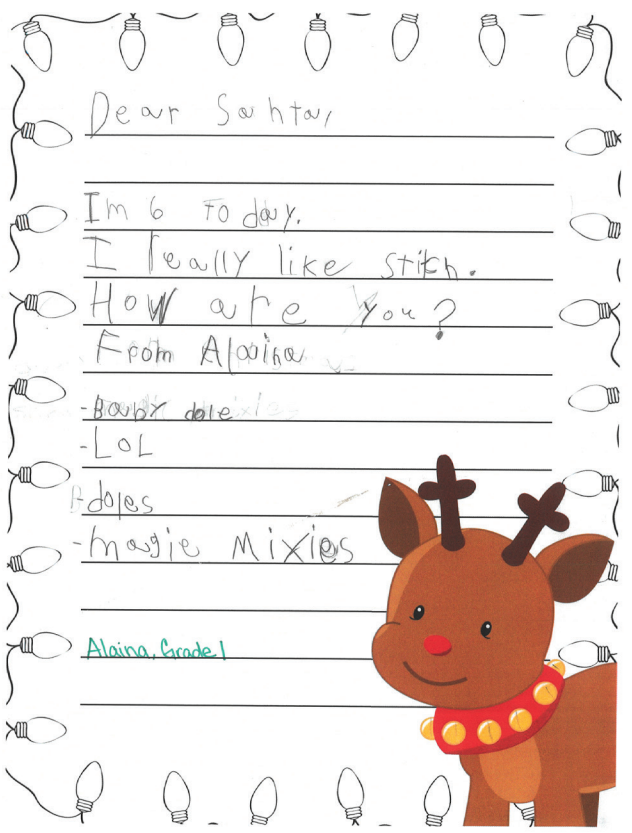
HAPPY HOLIDAYS

# at Cardiff Elementary School


Dear santa,
I am 8 years old now.
I share a room with my
sister. I do my best to
be kind to her. Please
bring me a kendol,
a fox rodolf, and a new
blankit. How dose
rodolfs nose
glow? Please say
hi to rodolf for
me. Love
Rowan, Grade 3



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from all of the staff at Emmerson Lumber, Emmerson Rent-All and Cottage Country Building Supplies

For for holiday hours visit our websites

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Bill Hodges
Bob Amos
Brian Verburg
Bryan Leavens
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## HUNTER CREEK ESTATES $239,000

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- 3 bedrooms,2 full 4-pc bathrooms
- 1,178 sq ft, open concept living, kitchen, dining room
- Full length peaked ceilings to add to spaciousness
- Forced air propane + propane fireplace
- Windows replaced-2016, Metal roof-2017
- Two sheds 10x10 and 8x6 for all your storage needs
- Low maintenance lifestyle

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info@cherylsmithremax
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## MINNICOCK LAKE RD VACANT LOT 30 ACRES $169,000

Located on a year-round township road, this 30 acre parcel offers the convenience of a short ten minute drive to the Village of Haliburton. This property is an ideal location for building your dream home or cottage retreat. Immerse yourself in the beauty of nature as the area is surrounded by numerous lakes and trails, providing endless opportunities for outdoor adventures.

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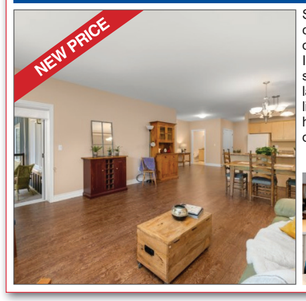
## BEER LAKE $289,000

- Beautiful quiet lake, west of Minden
- 900 ft of shoreline, 5.9 acres
- Smooth rocky point with pines
- Gentle lot well treed, gorgeous sunsets
- Lightly developed lake with balance of shoreline crown
- 1000's of acres of crown to the west
- Rough 4x4 road to lot

**Ted Vasey**
Sales Representative
705-455-2034
ted@tedvasey.ca

## SPACIOUS CONDO $499,000




Spacious 1227 sq. ft, 2 bedroom, 2 bath condo. Conveniently located in the Heart of Haliburton. Private lake view balcony! Inground heated garage with parking spot, storage locker. foyer, utility/in-suite laundry. Open concept kitchen/eating/living room. This unit has radiant in-floor heating, ICF construction, HRV system, ductless A/C.

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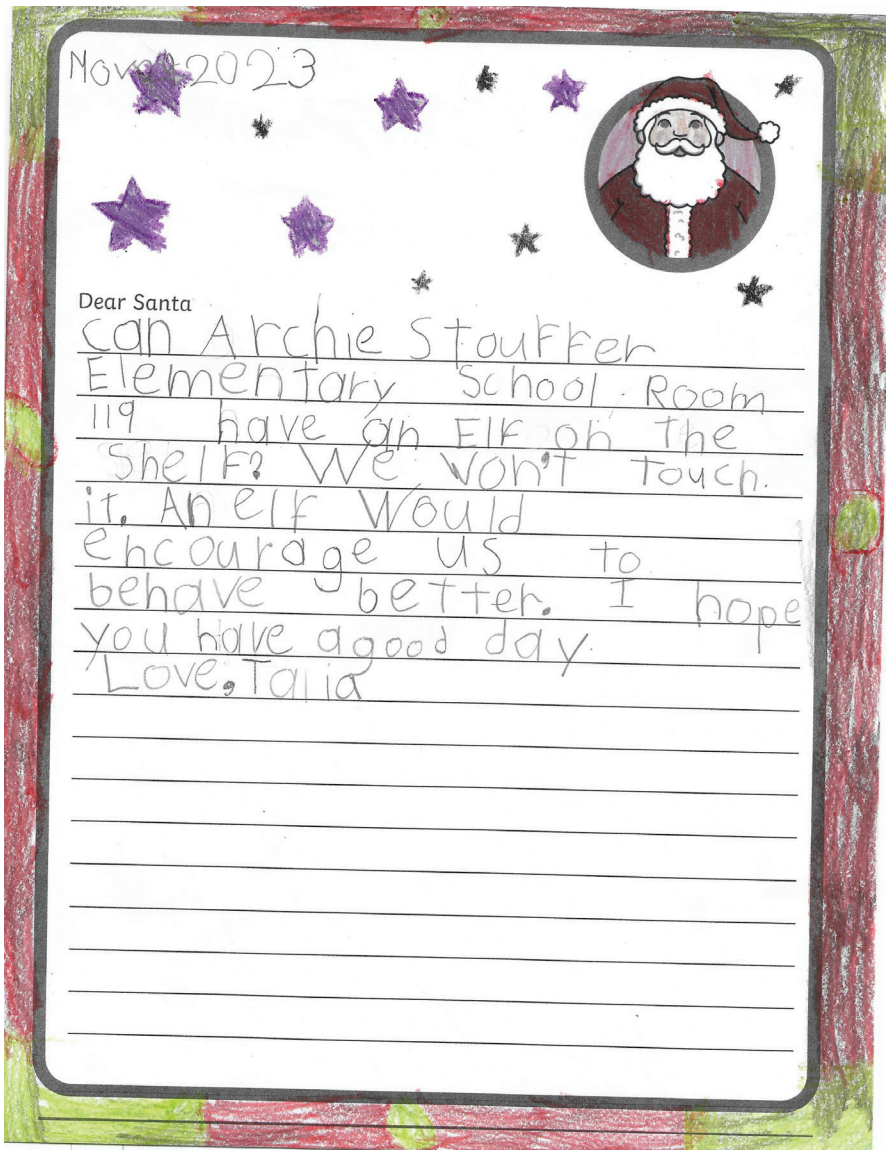
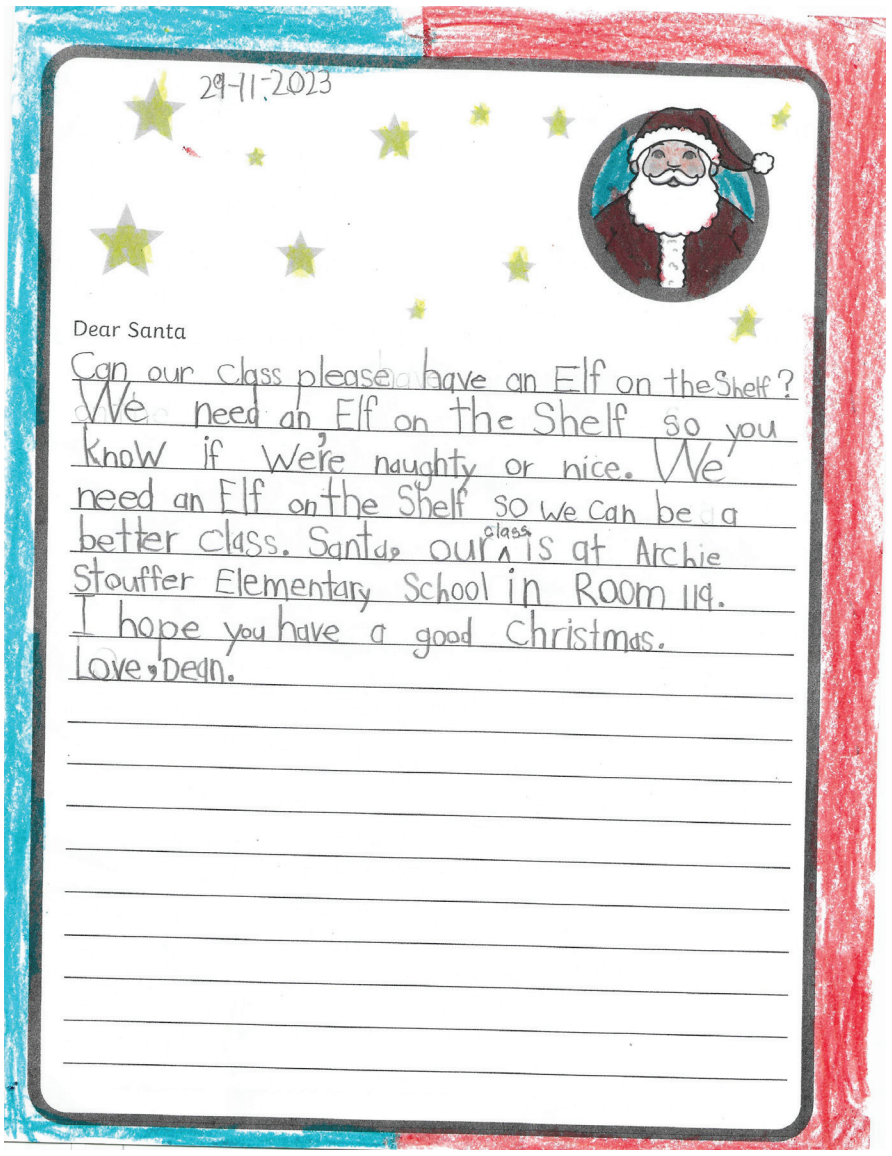
# Holiday artwork by students at Archie Stouffer


Nov 2023
Dear Santa
can Archie Stouffer Elementary School Room 119 have an Elf on the Shelf? We won't Touch it. An elf would encourage us to behave better. I hope you have a good day
Love, Talia


29-11-2023
Dear Santa
Can our class please have an Elf on the Shelf? We need an Elf on the Shelf so you know if we're naughty or nice. We need an Elf on the Shelf so we can be a better class. Santa our class is at Archie Stouffer Elementary School in Room 119.
I hope you have a good Christmas.
Love, Deon.

# Holiday artwork by students at Archie Stouffer

Ella H., Grade 2, Mrs. Montfort

Jacob Sutton, Grade 8

Joshua D, Grade 8

*Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

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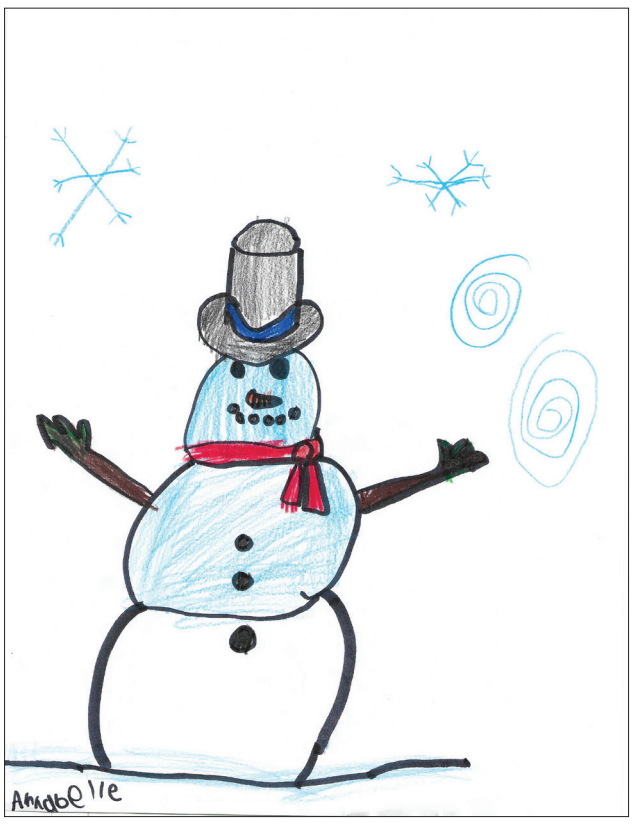
Mme. Gruppe class snowmen



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3. AM445 $299 4. AM369 $799 Rose Gold 5. AM299 $749

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11. AM585 $879 & DD7938 $399 Wedding Band
12. AM523 $579 & DD7807 $499 Wedding Band
13. AM430 Princess Cut $999 & DD7377 $599 Wedding Band
14. AM481 $849 & DD7598 $249 Wedding Band
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12. DD8079 $449 13. DX748 10Kt 0.15ct $499; 14Kt 0.25ct $899; 0.33ct $1,099; 0.50ct $1,599; 0.75ct $2,249; 1.00ct $3,149
14. DX552 10Kt 0.10ct $379; 0.20ct $549; 14Kt 0.25ct $779; 0.33ct $949; 0.50ct $1,299; 0.75ct $1,899; 1.00ct $2,499
15. DX829 0.50ct $849ea; 1.00ct $1,749ea; 1.50ct $2,999ea 16. DX652 0.05ct $369ea; 0.15ct $549ea; 0.35ct $999ea 17. DD8080 $579

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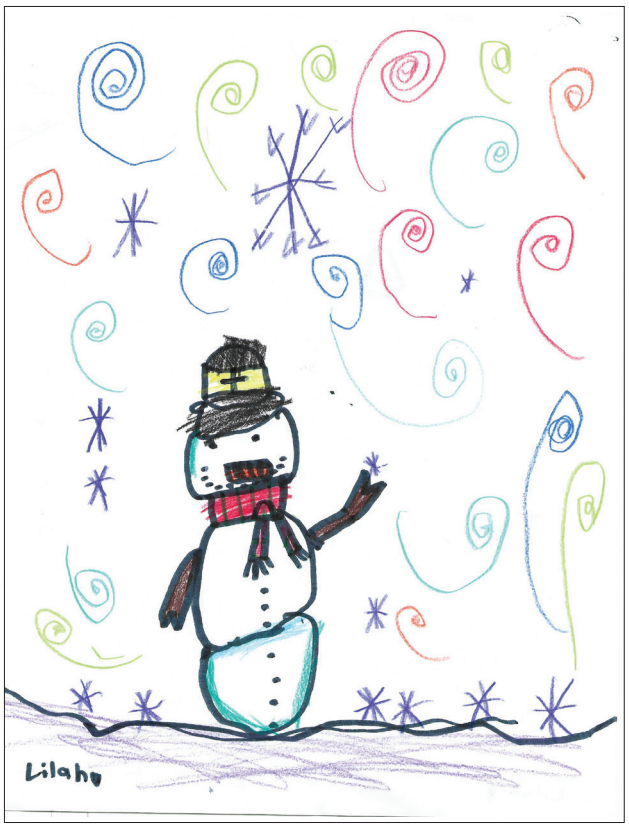
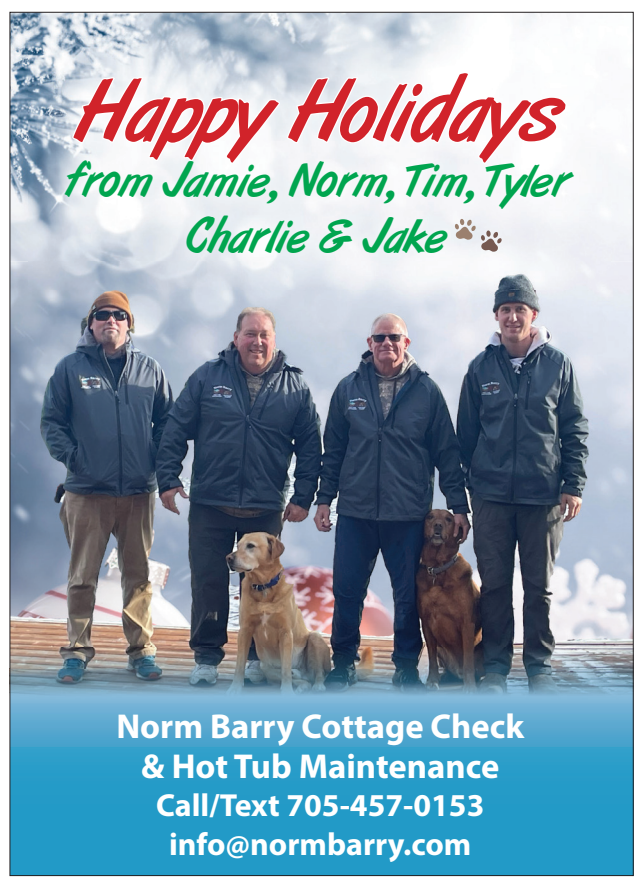
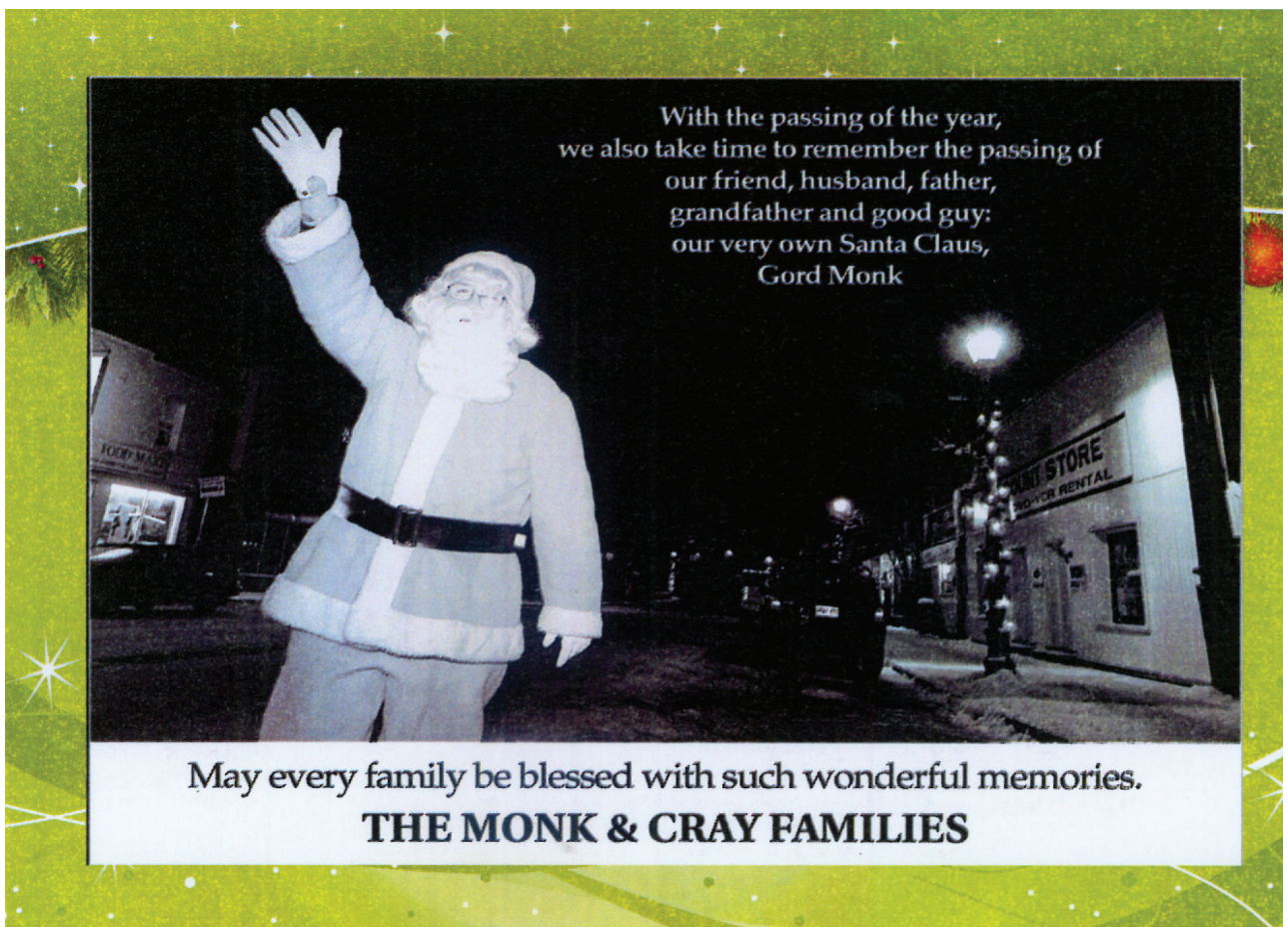
# Holiday artwork by students at

Mme. Gruppe class snowmen





# Stuart Baker Elementary School


With the passing of the year,
we also take time to remember the passing of
our friend, husband, father,
grandfather and good guy:
our very own Santa Claus,
Gord Monk
May every family be blessed with such wonderful memories.
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Mme. Gruppe class snowmen

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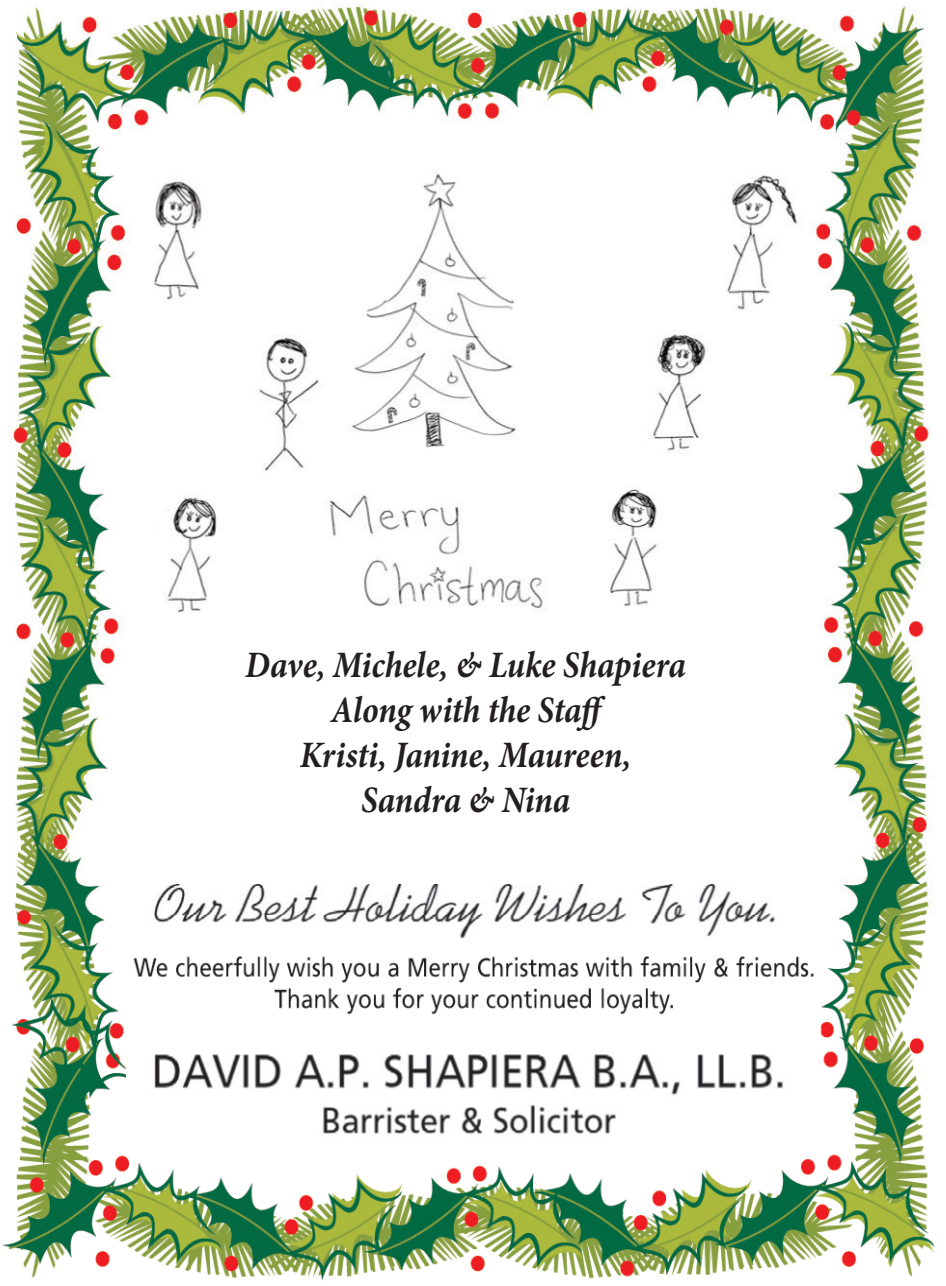


*Dave, Michele, & Luke Shapiera*
*Along with the Staff*
*Kristi, Janine, Maureen,*
*Sandra & Nina*

*Our Best Holiday Wishes To You.*

We cheerfully wish you a Merry Christmas with family & friends.
Thank you for your continued loyalty.

DAVID A.P. SHAPIERA B.A., LL.B.
Barrister & Solicitor

# Stuart Baker Elementary School

Gordon Schmidt JK SK, Mrs. Gaffrey/ Ms. Casey

Mme Wilson French Immersion Grade 2

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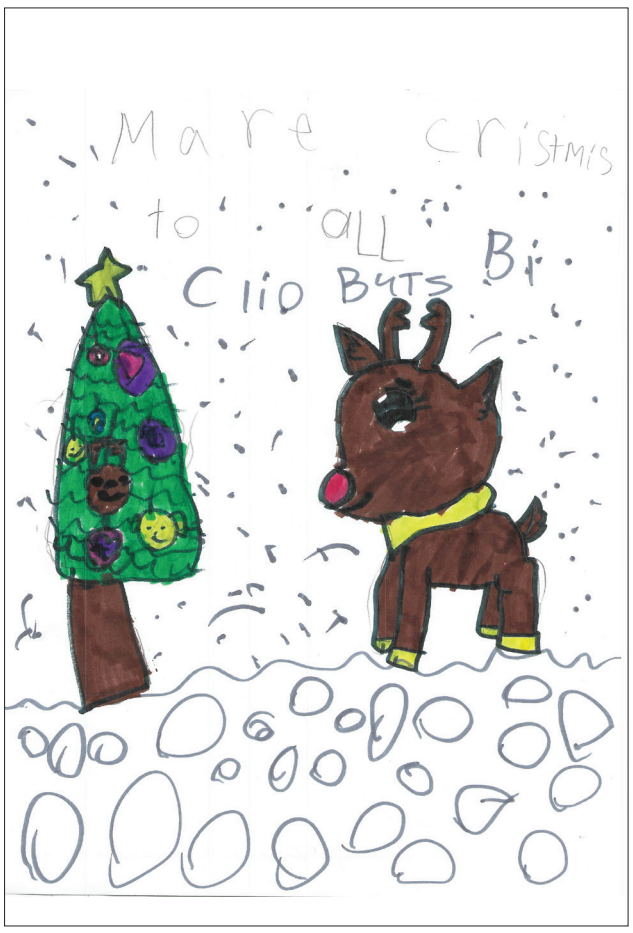


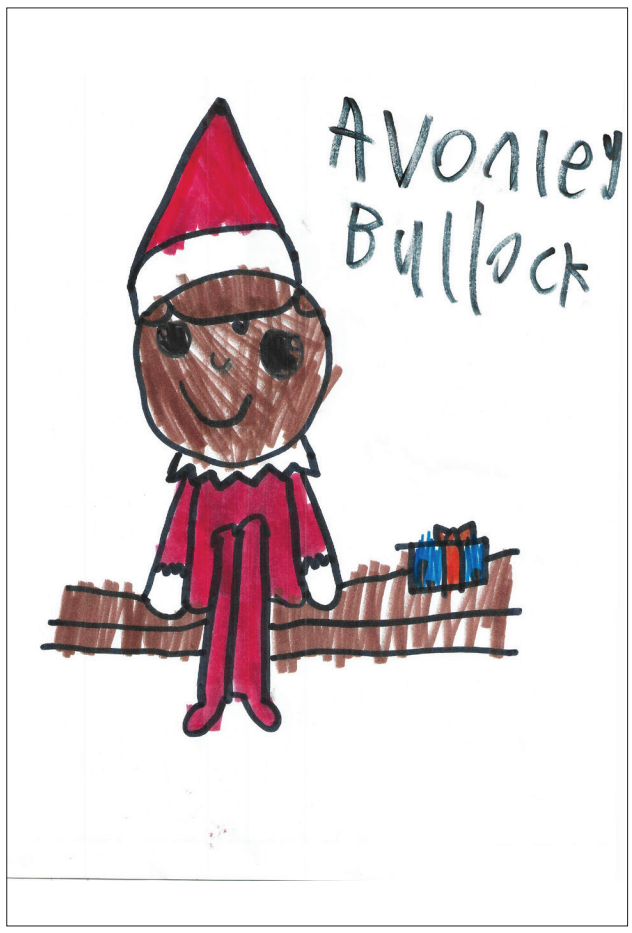


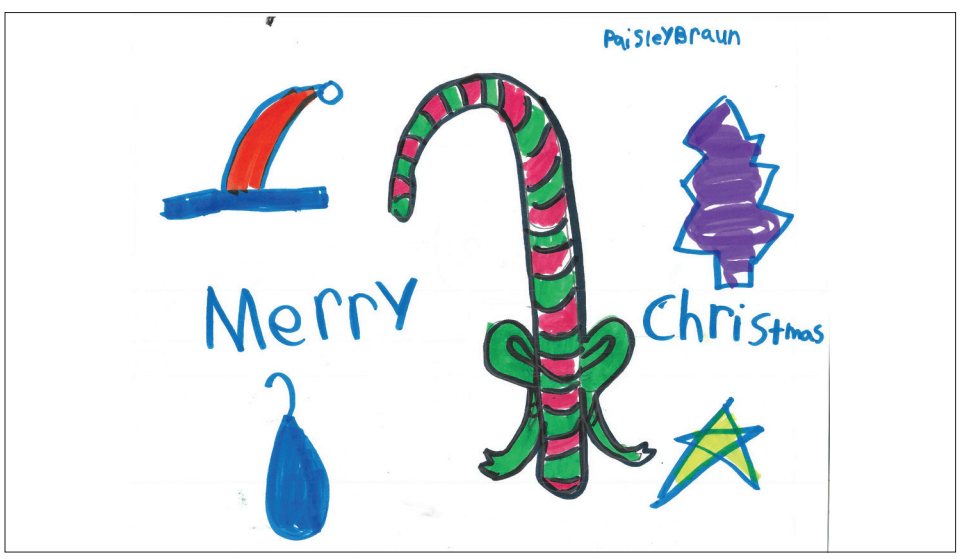


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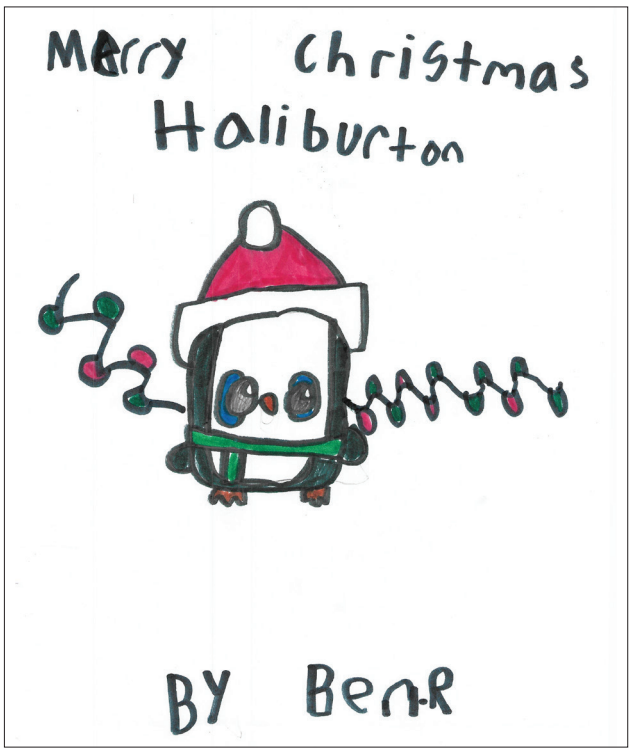
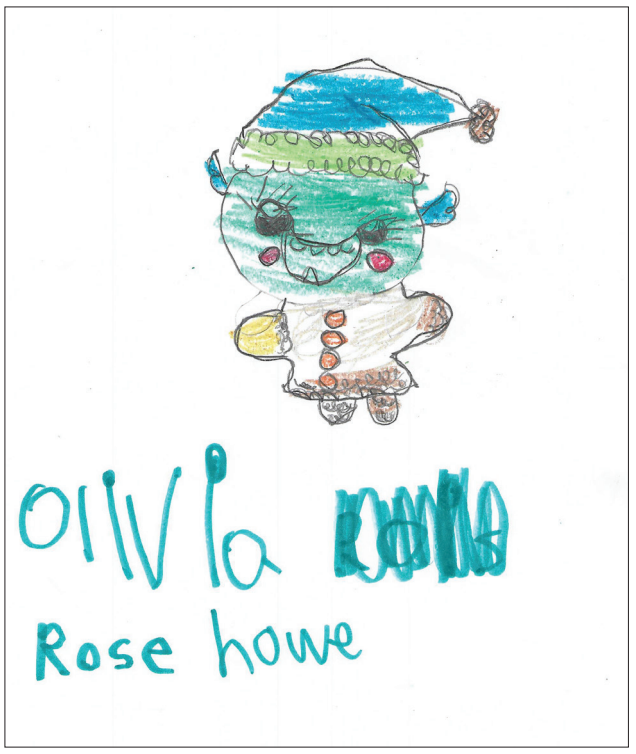
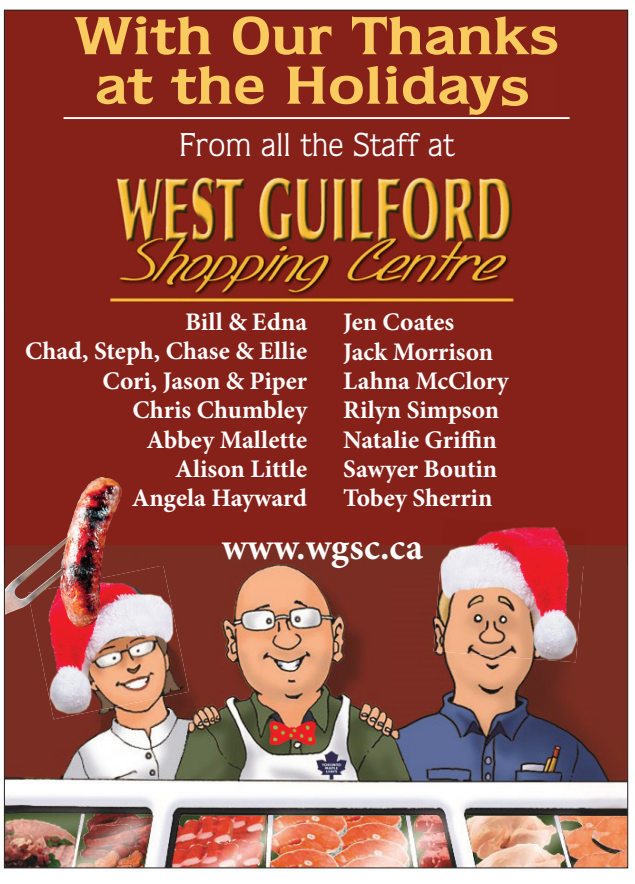
# Stuart Baker Elementary School



SEASON'S GREETINGS
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Barry & Kendra and the families of Blair Sand and Gravel
15527 Hwy. 118, Haliburton



SOLD
May the holiday season end the present year on a cheerful note and make way for a fresh and bright New Year.
Here's to a great 2024!
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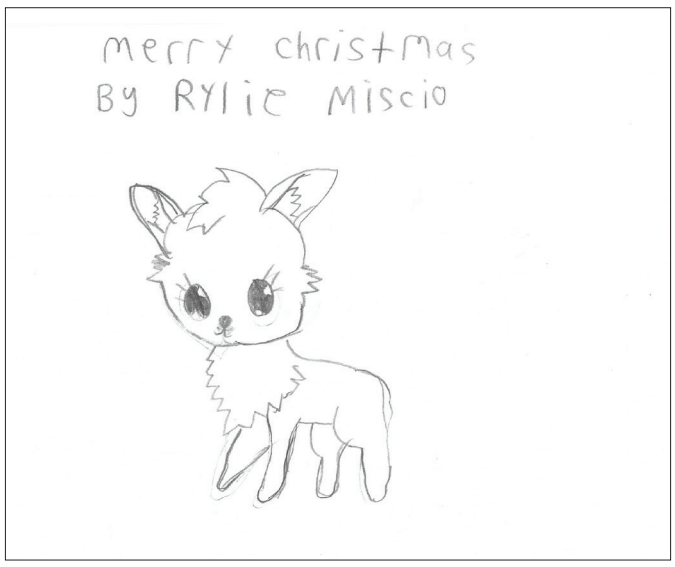
# Holiday artwork by students at

Mme Wilson French Immersion Grade 2



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from the staff of the Haliburton Echo and Minden Times*

Paul Banelopoulos
Natalia Brown
Vivian Collings
Debbie Comer
Karen London
Jennifer McEathron
James Matthews
Britney Pagliuca
Stacey Potalivo
Reed Sacharoff
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Emily Stonehouse
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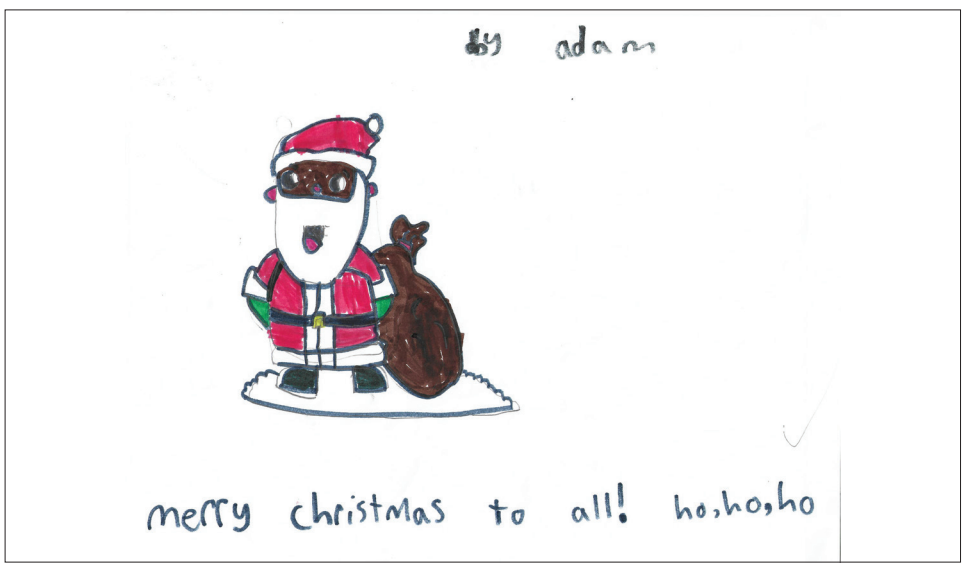
The offices of the Haliburton Echo and Minden Times will be closed from Monday, December 25 to January 2

THE ECHO HALIBURTON COUNTY

The Times MINDEN ONTARIO

# Stuart Baker Elementary School



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County Life

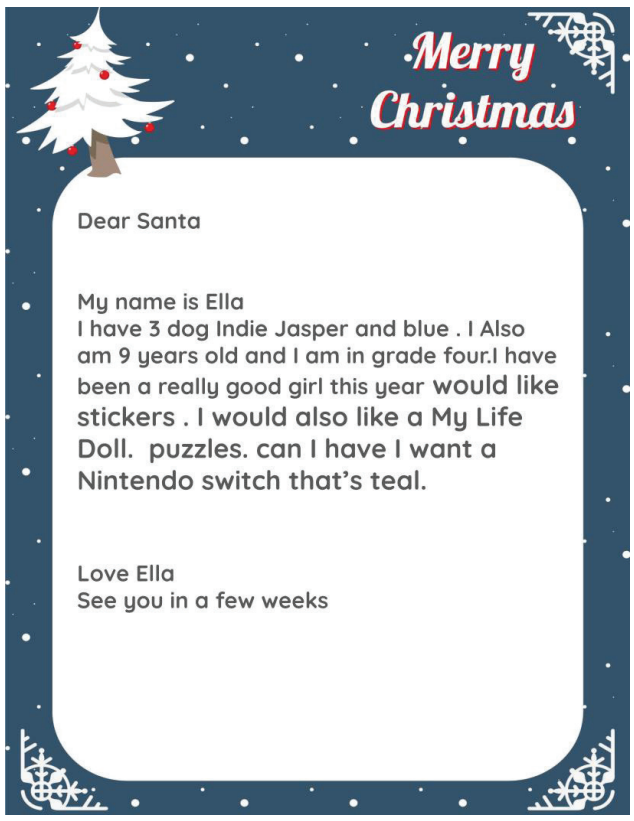
# Holiday artwork by students at

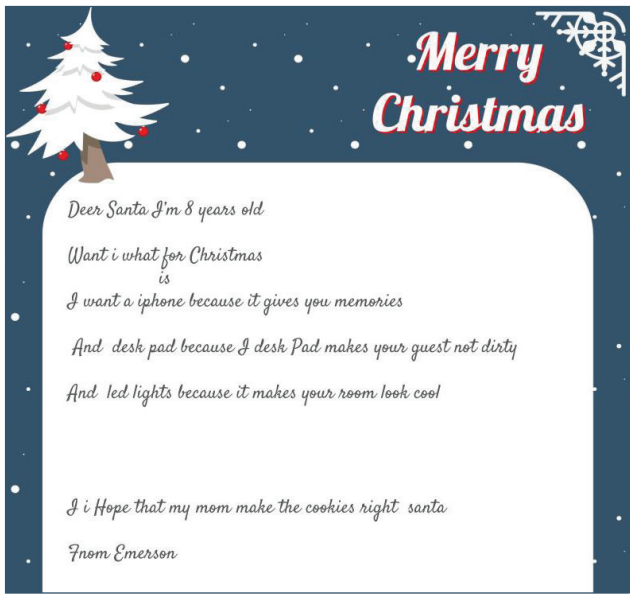
Hello Santa Claus I am Caleb Hitchcock. Santa you know everything about me. can i have a PlayStation VR 2 an Xbox gift card and playstation gift card. give me only what i deserve.

Sincerely caleb

Dear Santa Introduction: My name is Jarret Fun and I'm funny PS5 please from Santa Claus? Thank you for the present santa Claus From Jarret.

Merry Christmas
Dear Santa I am in grade 4 my name is Avery I saw your Footprints in my room was that you on Christmas Day for Christmas I want a VR set SketchBook and slime thanks for reading my letter see you soon Avery


Merry Christmas
Dear Santa
My name is Ella
I have 3 dog Indie Jasper and blue . I Also am 9 years old and I am in grade four.I have been a really good girl this year would like stickers . I would also like a My Life Doll. puzzles. can I have I want a Nintendo switch that's teal.
Love Ella
See you in a few weeks


Merry Christmas
Deer Santa I'm 8 years old
Want i what for Christmas
is
I want a iphone because it gives you memories
And desk pad because I desk Pad makes your guest not dirty
And led lights because it makes your room look cool
I i Hope that my mom make the cookies right santa
From Emerson

Dear Santa
Hi Santa My name is Charlie I'm 9 years old I've been good the last few years But I still fight with Ben a lot but I'm still good. This is what I want for Christmas: 25 squishmallows, 5 Things for Claire's, yeti water bottle give me what I deserve
I hope you like my cookies and milk
Charlie

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**August 25th** | 2:00 pm | NLPAP, Haliburton

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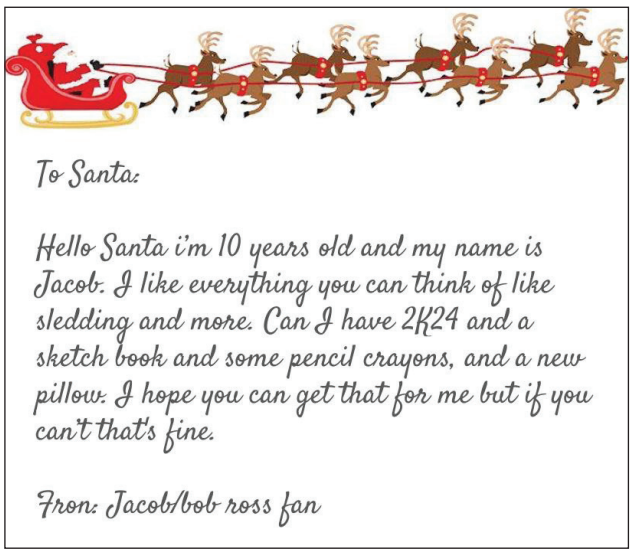
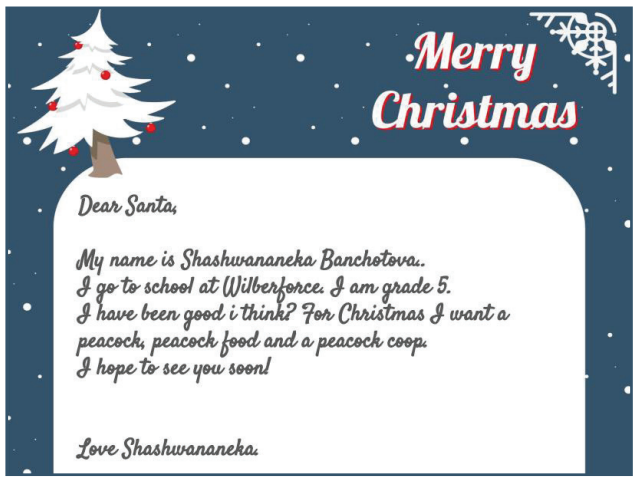
# Wilberforce Elementary School

Merry Christmas
Dear santa
You are the best. And I have been a good boy.
I would like for Christmas:A Remote control boat.A Snowmobile. And a kids four wheeler. that is What i would like for Christmas. If i deserve All of the stuff. I will see you soon. PS I hope you make it to my house.
From Hunter have fun.


To Santa:
Hello Santa i'm 10 years old and my name is Jacob. I like everything you can think of like sledding and more. Can I have 2K24 and a sketch book and some pencil crayons, and a new pillow. I hope you can get that for me but if you can't that's fine.
From: Jacob/bob ross fan

Dear santa
my name is Liam and i have been a good boy i help my mom clean the house my mom helps me I want a toy car for christmas And a Teddy bear

Dear santa this year I am 9 years old.. I think I have been a kind of good boy this year. Fore christmas I walnut the worlds biggest glue stick. Thank you for reading my note. from:Liam


Merry Christmas
Dear Santa,
My name is Shashwananeka Banchotova..
I go to school at Wilberforce. I am grade 5.
I have been good i think? For Christmas I want a peacock, peacock food and a peacock coop.
I hope to see you soon!
Love Shashwananeka.

## Santa Letters

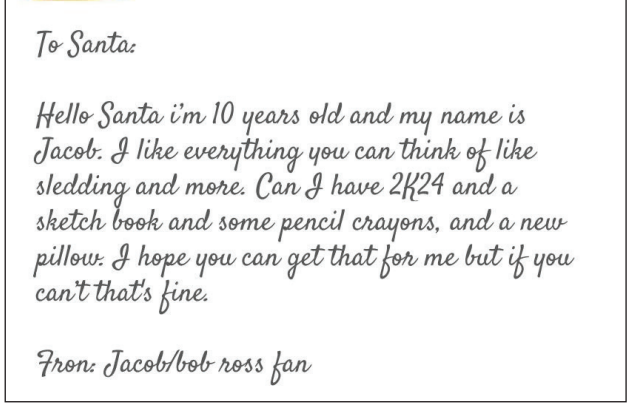
| Greeting: | Introduction: |
|---|---|
| Hi | I like dogs |

What do you want Santa to know about you?
I like hanging out with my family.

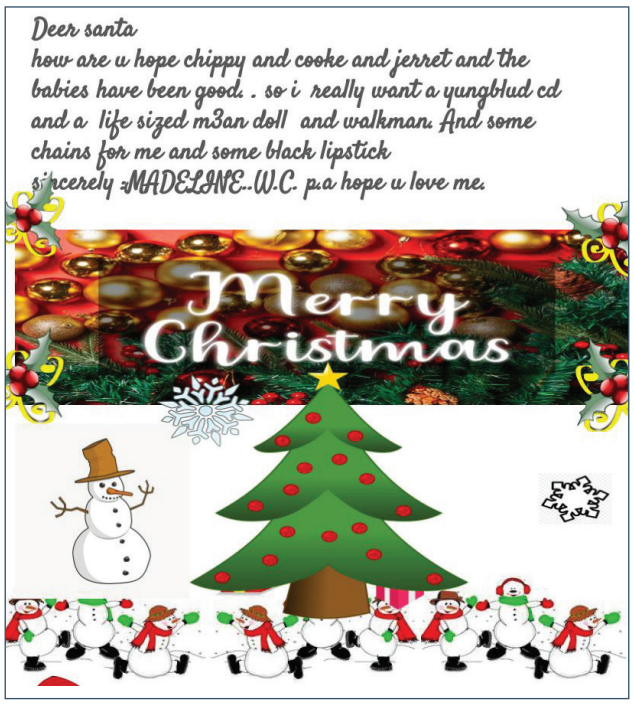
Christmas Wish list:
I want new video games control for Christmas I want to RC car and that's about it I don't want anything else

Hi Santa,
My name is West.I know all kinds of trains. I want a crane and what can grab snow, A baby dog and A Google Pixel 7.
See you later alligator.
Monkey

Merry Christmas
Dear Santa
My name is Tyson I have been good this year. I have 1 sibling. For Christmas I would like the legend of Zelda Teres of the Kingdom or the lego atte set.
Ps we're going to make cookies for you.
Frun:Tyson
to:Santa


To Santa:
Hello Santa i'm 10 years old and my name is Jacob. I like everything you can think of like sledding and more. Can I have 2K24 and a sketch book and some pencil crayons, and a new pillow. I hope you can get that for me but if you can't that's fine.
From: Jacob/bob ross fan

I would like a PlayStation I'm a band I would like a PlayStation steering wheel please.Or I would like a VR headset please in white I hope you enjoy the cookies parrots and milk that we left out for you.


Deer santa
how are u hope chippy and cooke and jerret and the babies have been good. . so i really want a yungblud cd and a life sized m3an doll and walkman. And some chains for me and some black lipstick
sincerely :MADELINE..W.C. p.s hope u love me.
Merry Christmas

## Santa Letters

| Greeting: | Introduction: |
|---|---|
| Dear Santa | hi! |

Christmas Wish list: I'm out of PlayStation 4s

## Santa Letters

What do you want Santa to know about you?
I've been really good this year

Christmas Wish list:
Ps5 vr V-Bucks

| Concluding Sentence: What does the North Pole look like | Salutation: gob by |
|---|---|

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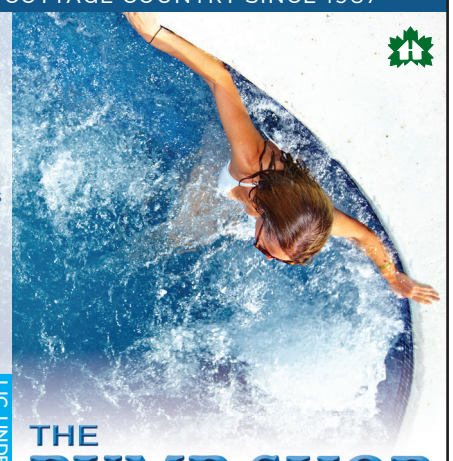

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10 AM: Regular Sunday Service

7 PM: Christmas Eve Service with Christmas Carols and Readings

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No Christmas Day Service
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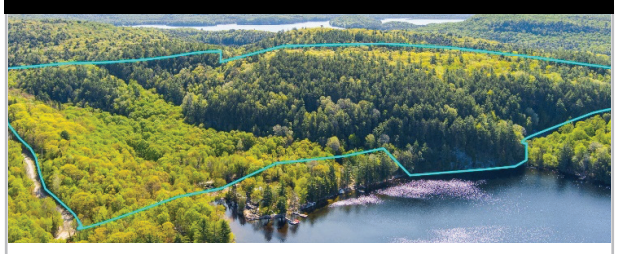

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# Merry Christmas from the ECHO-HO-HO!

**THIS WEEK**

**Safe sledding**

Snowmobilers are warned to stay off the ice
... see page 4

**FEATURE**

***IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME***

Ruth Still has written a book on the history of Eagle Lake... see page 17

**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**

STORIES OF THE SEASON

In our special supplement we recount tales of this special time

MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1994

THE HALIBURTON COUNTY ECHO

"The Voice of the Highlands Since 1882"

Vol. 112, No. 45 • 64 pages • 70 Cents + GST = 75 Cents

## Wary Minden residents assured health support

by MARTHA PERKINS
*Editor*

The Ministry of Health is committed to providing meaningful emergency services in Minden as part of the local hospital restructuring project.

"Yes, yes, yes," said Sheri Weisberg, responding to Stuart Baker's friendly "grilling" at Wednesday night's meeting of the Acting Health Services Board.

"The Ministry is 150% behind this project and looks forward to seeing it fulfilled," said Weisberg, who works with the Ministry's Institutional Health Group in Toronto. "This is looked upon as a model for rural communities so we're fully supportive."

Baker, who is chairman of the board which has the task of deciding how to spend the $10.6-million committed to the project, says that there are four parts to the restructuring process. Two of them take place in Minden – expanding Hyland Crest and building an emergency unit at the site – and two in Haliburton – upgrading the existing hospital to consolidate acute care beds and building 30 new long-term care beds.

Weisberg assured the board that all four parts are integral to the entire package.

"Is the development of a meaningful emergency care unit in Minden as important as the consolidation of beds?" Baker asked.

"Yes it is," Weisberg responded. "Minden and Haliburton are equal."

"Are 30 long-term care beds as important?" Baker asked.

"Yes," Weisberg responded. "There's nothing that's ranked (in order of importance.)"

"We're trying to create equity for the entire population," added Elaine Bishop of the Ministry's Information, Planning and Evaluation Branch.

Because there are some questions about what the emergency unit will include, Minden area residents have been nervous about the future. Gerry Rome, an Anson, Hindon and Minden councillor and president of the Staanworth Non-Profit Housing Association, says the residents are "extremely upset" about the future of hospital services in

Please turn to page 3

## Sherborne reeve is warden

*■ Ross Rabjohn gets the nod the second time around*

by MARTHA PERKINS
*Editor*

It was almost a case of "déjà vu all over again."

Just like last December, on Tuesday night the same two men were in the auditorium of Hyland Crest asking their fellow county councillors to vote for them as warden of Haliburton County.

Last year, the vote came down to an eight-eight tie between Lutterworth's Jim McMahon and Sherborne et al's Ross Rabjohn. To break the tie, a name was drawn out of a box and McMahon became warden. (Rabjohn's deputy-reeve had been unable to attend the meeting, hence the even number of county councillors.)

This year, there was not a tie and it was Rabjohn who garnered most of the votes, earning him the distinction of being political leader of Haliburton County for the next year. Because voting is done secretly, the final tally was not made public.

Before the election, Rev. Christopher Greaves addressed county council and the various county employees and ratepayers gathered in the auditorium. He asked God to bless all the county councillors who have gone before, as well as the ones now serving. He asked that councillors be mindful of the needs of their fellow Highlanders and asked that God give them the courage and guidance to support and unite the county.

McMahon's bid for an unprecedented second consecutive term as warden was endorsed by Anson, Hindon and Minden Reeve Jeanne Anthon and Lutterworth Deputy-reeve Lisa Mercer.

Anthon said extending McMahon's tenure would provide the stability the county needs. One year is an insufficient amount of time to achieve all goals and "the county would benefit to have the same master at the helm." She believed McMahon would provide stability and proven leadership.

Rabjohn was endorsed by Snowdon Reeve George Simmons and Monmouth Reeve Keith Tallman.

It is important for the border municipalities to know that the county is aware of their needs and concerns, Simmons says. One of those municipalities is Sherborne et al and having their reeve as warden will be a sign they aren't being neglected by the rest of the county.

As well, it's important for the warden to wear two hats: one as a municipal representative and one as a county representative and Simmons believed Rabjohn would keep the county perspective in mind.

It was then time for the candidates to speak.

McMahon said that his time as warden really flew. Last December, he had a plan to improve the quality of life for county residents and his present objective is to complete the realization of that plan.

Borrowing from the comments of others, McMahon described himself as being hard-working, unselfish, conscientious in his daily visits to the county office, straight-forward, honest and fair. These obervations are also part of his self image, but above all, he said, "I am a modest man who wishes only to serve his community, his family and his conscience."

He credited his year as warden as being a time of saving money.

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**REVERSAL OF FORTUNE:**

*Last year, Jim McMahon and Ross Rabjohn both wanted to be warden of Haliburton County. After the tied vote, McMahon's name was pulled out of a hat. One year later, McMahon wanted to be warden for a second term and once again he was vying for the honour against the Sherborne et al reeve. This time, however, the Sherborne reeve was successful in getting most of his fellow county councillors vote. Here McMahon helps Rabjohn put on the warden's robe of office*

## The gift of giving:

*Food and book drives capture Christmas spirit*

by PETER DOWNS
*Staff Reporter*

About 200 Haliburton County families will have something more to celebrate this Christmas.

And hundreds of others who have supported the 4Cs Food Bank and the Haliburton Rotary Club's first-ever book drive can go into the holiday season knowing they've made a difference.

Bob Thompson, one of the directors of the 4Cs, says food and gift donations have been coming in steadily to fill up the special boxes the organization puts together for families in need each Christmas.

The Rotary's book drive has been a great success as well, with more than 500 new and like-new books already collected, says Rotarian Linda Shadbolt.

The books will be added to the 4Cs' Christmas boxes in an effort to give people an added gift and to promote literacy at the same time

While the 4Cs usually helps feed about 30 families every month throughout the year, there is a huge demand just before Christmas. The food bank expects to hand out about 200 Christmas food boxes this week.

Each box is filled with about 50 pounds of non-perishable food items, as well as a food voucher and some hand-wrapped Christmas presents.

Rose Barry and her sister Betty Smith have been packing the boxes over the past week or so with the help of some additional volunteers.

Mrs. Barry says there has been a shortage in the number of presents donated that are suitable for older children and teenagers, partially because the number of children benefitting from the 4Cs' assistance has risen.

To make sure there will be presents in the Christmas boxes for older kids and teens, as well as the younger children, the Food Bank has used some of the money that people have donated to the cause to purchase suitable gifts.

Thomspon said the generousity of the community continually amazes him.

"I think of the other food banks in different cities and the advertising they have to do to get to the people," he said. "It just happens here without any particular drive ... Certainly this community captures the Christmas spirit. They're great."

Among the many associations, service groups, businesses and individuals that have been helping out, he noted Sir Sandford Fleming College which donated the space it had rented out at the Drag River Municipal Building for the 4Cs to use to put together all of its food and gift boxes.

Shadbolt was also surprised by the overwhelming support of the community.

"We've had a really terrific response for a first-year effort," she said. "It's definitely something that we'll continue again next year."

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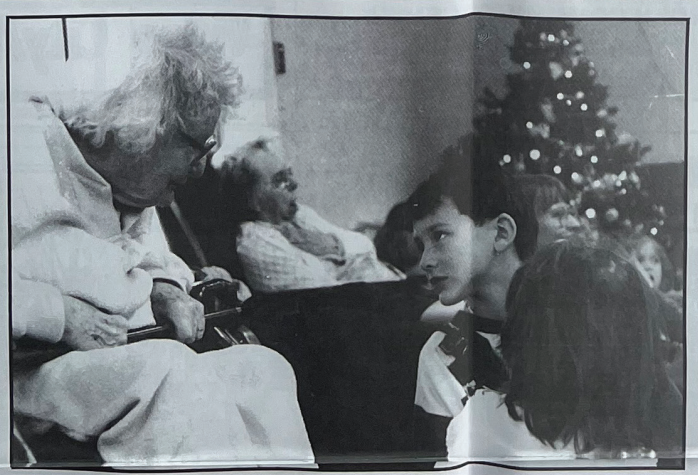
**EARLY DEADLINE BEFORE CHRISTMAS**

To make it easier for *Echo* staff to spend the Christmas holidays with their families (and finish off some last-minute shopping), the deadline for next week's *Echo* is a few days early.

We ask that all advertising and editorial copy be submitted by Wednesday at 5 p.m.

We will be laying out the paper on Thursday but it will not appear on the streets until Tuesday, December 27.

Meanwhile, the *Echo* staff would like to extend our best wishes to our readers and advertisers for this holiday season.



CHRISTMAS SHOW: In between songs, Agnes Ainsworth takes a moment to chat with one of the Grade 1 children from Victoria Street Elementary Street School who visited Extendicare on Thursday to put on a Christmas concert. The students later handed out Christmas cards they had made for each of the residents.

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